LETTERS FROM FRANCE

TO A

GENTLEMAN

IN THE

SOUTH OF IRELAND:

CONTAINING

VARIOUS SUBJECTS

INTERESTING TO BOTH NATIONS.

WRITTEN IN 1787.

BY JAMES ST. JOHN, ESQ.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL I.

DUBLIN:

PRINTED BY P. BYRNE, GRAFTON-STREET.

M, DCC, LXXXVIII.

BRITISH MUSEUM
15
NOV
68

DEDICATION.

TO HIS GRACE

The Duke of Dorſet,

AMBASSADOR FROM HIS MAJESTY TO THE FRENCH COURT.

MY LORD DUKE,

I SHOULD eſteem that ſilver minute as the happieſt of my life, in which I could give a proof of the infinite reſpect I bear your Grace of Dorſet. A dedication I

am not vain enough to think, can any way contribute to the honor of your Grace; but it gives me an opportunity to declare, how much I am,

My Lord Duke,
Your Grace's
Moſt obliged,
Moſt devoted,
and
Moſt humble ſervant,
JAMES ST. JOHN.

CONTENTS

CONTENTS

OF THE

FIRST VOLUME.

LETTER I.

Page

LADIES of Paris. Lap-dogs. 1

LETTER II.

Architecture of the magnificent bridge at Neuillet near Paris. Deſcription of St. Genivieve's church, at preſent building at Paris. 6

LETTER III.

Page

Old cathedral of Notre-Dame. Architecture of the choir of that church. Reflections on architecture. 14

LETTER IV.

The celebrated colonade of the Louvre. The high roofs on many of the French palaces. 23

LETTER V.

Deſcription of the magnificent entrance to Paris on the weſt ſide. Statues in the Tuilerie gardens. 28

LETTER VI.

The public walks ſurrounding the city of Paris. The rage for dancing among

Page

among the French peaſants. It ſhould not be diſcouraged among our peaſantry in Ireland. - 35

LETTER VII.

A deſcription of the king's review of the French and Swiſs guards. The pompous appearance of the queen's retinue. Exerciſe of the troops. Why there ſhould be more officers in a French than in an Engliſh regiment. 45

LETTER VIII.

The king's manufactory of tapeſtry. Dying of ſcarlet. Chemical reflections. Royal manufactory of porcelaine. Different methods of fabricating that delicate ware. - 52

LETTER IX.

Page

King's library. Mount Parnaſſus. Antique medals deſerve our attention in Ireland. - - 62

LETTER X.

French ladies ride like the men. Several literary and military female characters have appeared in France. Female delicacy. - 65

LETTER XI.

French ladies. Confined education of the fair ſex. The inhabitants of France in general are not ſo vigorous as the Iriſh. Reflections on the cauſes of ſuch variety in the human ſpecies. Diet of the French peaſants. - - 71

LETTER

LETTER XII.

Page

The new buildings at the Palais-roial. Its beautiful appearance by night. Reflections on the architecture of the Palais-roial. Great confusion among the beau-monde at the Palais roial. 83

LETTER XIII.

Procession of blue ribbons at Versailles. The orangery a noble piece of architecture. A remarkable homage paid to the royal children. - 92

LETTER XIV.

The beautiful chateau de Trianon in the gardens of Versailles. Situation of Versailles very ill chosen. Reflections on the English and French taste

Page

in gardening. The Engliſh taſte is not perfectly ſimilar to the Chineſe. 97

LETTER XV.

The château of St. Germain, formerly the reſidence of James II. The terrace of St. Germain. Château-neuf. The great Machine de Marly - 104

LETTER XVI.

The beautiful and uncommon appearance of the whole city of Paris on the day of Corpus-Chriſti. The proceſſions. That of St. Sulpice church in particular. Reflections on religious parade. A very remarkable inſcription in the church of St. Martin-des-champs. Reflections on fanatic cruelty. - - 110

LETTER

LETTER XVII.

Page

Character given of the Engliſh by Tacitus. Character given of the Engliſh in the Henriade of Voltaire. The modern French ſtill retain ſome veſtiges of the nature of their anceſtors; although in many reſpects much degenerate. Reflections on liberty. The adoration paid to their ſovereigns by the French. - 127

LETTER XVIII.

The ancient ſtate of England, France, and Ireland. The Druids, and Druidical temples. Many Druidical cuſtoms as yet retained in northern Europe. Bonfire on St. John's eve at Paris. A barbarous ceremony on St. John's eve at Breſſe. Reflections

on

Page

on the Iriſh and French languages. The Iriſh very expreſſive. The French faulty in certain reſpects. An abſurdity common to many of the European languages. - 136

LETTER XIX.

A French opera. The dancing of the opera girls; the machinery; and the muſic. Muſic of the ancient Greeks. Scotch muſic. Plaintive muſic of the old Iriſh. Carualach's *muſic.* - - 152

LETTER XX.

Reflections on the rhyme and metre of the French dramatic compoſitions. 161

LETTER XXI.

The French opinion of Engliſh tragedies. 165

LETTER

LETTER XXII.

Page

The Tragedy of the Cid, rendered improbable by being compoſed obedient to the rules of Ariſtotle. Racine's tragedy of Athalie. A moſt admired paſſage. Shakeſpeare in compariſon with the French dramatic authors. 168

LETTER XXIII.

French authors. Deiſtical works of Voltaire. Volatility of the French authors in general. Certain very pitiful poetical productions. 175

LETTER XXIV.

The quarries of Mont-martre. The plaſter or ſtucco of Paris. Selenites of Mont-martre. How it may be poſſible

Page

poſſible to fabricate a ſimilar ſtucco in Ireland. Some reflections on the nature of ſtones, and attempts to prove their vegetation. Reflections on vegetables in general: On the water with which they are nouriſhed. It appears that the greater part of things at preſent in a dry and ſolid ſtate muſt have once been ſimple water. The compoſition of water. A ſuppoſition that our planet originated from hydrogen and oxygen. Fixation of the vital air baſis in combuſtion and diſengagement of the matter of heat and light. Some reflections on that immenſe luminary the Sun; and from whence the light proceeds. - - 181

LETTER XXV.

The hoſpital of Hotel-Dieu, the greateſt in the world. Its primitive foundation.

Page

foundation. Its preſent ſituation. A deſcription of the filth and horrors of the place. Inhumanity to the ſick. The attention ſhewed to ſick people by the common Iriſh. 195

LETTER XXVI.

The practice of phyſic at Hotel-Dieu and la Charité. Their method of treating intermittants. The patients often periſh for the want of the Peruvian bark and generous nouriſhment. Chirurgical department of Hotel-Dieu much improved of late. Mr. Gileſpie's propoſal to introduce dreſſing with lime juice and water. Abſurdities in the chirurgical practice of Hotel-Dieu. Wounds of the head. Lithotomy. The teeth taken out of the jaws of all the dead men

Page

men to be ſold to the Engliſh dentiſts. Abominable filthineſs of Hotel-Dieu. - - 204

LETTER XXVII.

The phyſicians of France. Reflections on the continuation of inoculation. French practice of phyſic. The complex preſcriptions of ſome of their phyſicians. Codex medicamentorius *of Paris. The light in which phyſicians are held in France. Anatomy and diſſection taught with ſucceſs at Paris, and why.* - 215

LETTERS

FROM

FRANCE.

LETTER I.

Paris, March 1ſt, 1787.

My dear Friend,

AS the ſea at preſent ſeparates us, and as we cannot enjoy the pleaſures of mutual diſcourſe, I muſt content myſelf with the poor ſubſtitute of conveying to you my ideas on paper. In obedience to your requeſt, I ſhall endeavour to

give you ſome account in my future letters, of ſuch objects in this country as may appear either new or intereſting, and not already repeatedly mentioned by travellers.

It is aſtoniſhing that, although the diſtance is ſo inconſiderable between the ſouth of Ireland and ſome part of France, there ſhould be ſuch a prodigious contraſt between the inhabitants of the two countries, both in their temper, their morals, their cuſtoms, and eſpecially in their perſons.

As to the ladies of Paris, I have ſeen many of them with the moſt enchanting airs in the world, and an eternal flow of vivacity in their eyes; but they are in general ſo daubed with paint, that I cannot admire them. Scarce a lady appears

pears in public without it; not even the matrons of ſeventy; for it is looked upon as contrary to all faſhionable elegance and decorum, that a lady ſhould appear in her natural colours after ſhe has given her hand in marriage. The ladies of Paris appear to lay-on merely through faſhion, and not in imitation of nature. At any rate, they cannot daub themſelves ſo intolerably, to make themſelves look more beautiful. If it be to gain the affections of the men, I muſt think the ladies in the wrong; for that man muſt be very vitiated in taſte, who would not prefer a fair one ever ſo pale, to a woman painted as the faſhionable ladies of Paris are even by day light. Almoſt every lady appears in public with her lap-dog, either in her arms, or led by a ribbon at her ſide. I venture to ſay, that there is not one of theſe faſhionable

ladies who carry ſuch worthleſs little animals in their arms in the public gardens, that would not be aſhamed to carry her infant; which is unnatural and ridiculous. Theſe little lap-dogs are ſhorn in a moſt whimſical manner, and have trinkets and bells for ever jingling about their ears. I am diſguſted with human nature when I ſee a woman of years eternally fooling with ſuch ſenſeleſs creatures: and yet nothing is more common in every public walk at Paris. I ſee the women both old and young, and the men of every deſcription, flirting, careſſing, and even diſcourſing with their *petit chien*. A man fond of making puns, would be apt to ſay, that the Pariſians were afflicted with a ſpecies of canine madneſs. You cannot ingratiate yourſelf more readily in certain Pariſian ſocieties, than by kiſſing and playing with

with their little dogs, and extolling their beauty. You immediately appear a man of politeneſs, good-nature, and humanity; but ſhould you tread upon the nice little pat of *le petit chien*, the moſt gentle lady of Paris could not refrain from exclaiming *comme les Anglais ſont barbares!* and you are for ever after perfectly ruined in her eſteem.

LETTER II.

10th March.

THE preſent century may, with juſtice, be called by futurity, the century of bridges; for the numerous and beautiful bridges erected by the moderns in almoſt every part of Europe, far exceed any thing of the kind left us by the ancient Egyptians, Greeks, or Romans. It is really ſurpriſing, that in the early ages, when men were more rude and unpoliſhed than at preſent, more ſimple and uncorrupted by luxury, they laviſhed the wealth of whole nations on the moſt ridiculouſly uſeleſs and expenſive edifices. I mean the pyramids, which at beſt are only unwieldy maſſes; built perhaps to pleaſe the capricious vanity of

of ſome of their great men or ſovereigns, at the ſame time that they neglected the erecting of great bridges; the moſt uſeful and neceſſary of all edifices for the promoting of commerce, and the intercourſe of ſociety, eſpecially at a time when navigation was very little known or attended to. In my opinion, the magnificence of a people cannot be diſplayed more nobly than by the erection of great bridges, and other buildings of the kind, which muſt be of general utility to preſent and future generations, and remain ſo many monuments of our magnificence and taſte.

The bridge of Neuillet on the river Seine, not far from Paris, is one of the completeſt works of the kind I have any where ſeen. This bridge is broad and commodious, and flagged on each ſide. It is perfectly flat, and on a level

with the road, reſembling in this reſpect the old bridge of Thomond in Limerick: I am told this is one of the moſt difficult works in the erecting of a great bridge. The arches are not ſemi-circular, as in moſt other bridges, but elliptical; and are ſtretched out to ſo great a length, that if you approach, and conſider with the eye a ſpace of about a yard or two of the arch, you cannot perceive any concavity in the ſtone, and think it abſolutely ſtraight. The architect had many things in his favour for the conſtruction of this beautiful bridge; the land on each ſide of the river is naturally high, and therefore he could build a flat bridge without raiſing artificial hills; and the materials for building were excellent; for many of the ſtones which compoſe the arches are from ſix to nine yards in length. As the bridge is without

out a riſe at the center, the architect was under the neceſſity of perforating it at regular intervals, to drain off the water, which otherwiſe might lodge on the work, eſpecially after great rains. The perforations are ſituated at each ſide, and contrived in ſuch a manner, as not at all to affect the ſtrength or beauty of the bridge. The ſtone balluſtrades on ſome of our bridges give them a moſt elegant appearance; and the bridge of Neuillet as well as the other bridges I have ſeen in France, appear naked without them; but perhaps the balluſtrades are more neceſſary in Great Britain and Ireland than in France; for if we had not ſomething in the nature of a high parapet on our bridges, the common people would very frequently throw one another into the river, and drunken men would often loſe their lives.

There is no church in Paris can bear any competition with St. Paul's cathedral at London, for external majeſtic appearance. I wonder much that Lewis XIV. did not attempt to rival the Britiſh capital in this maſter-piece of architecture. The new church of St. Genivieve at Paris, is built in the form of a Grecian croſs. The interior diviſions of the church are formed by rows of pillars, inſtead of arcades, which appear moſt delicately light and beautiful. The pillars are managed in ſuch a manner, as to form by their rows four croſſes, which unite in one great croſs under the dome. I am ſurpriſed that a modern architect would build a church in this whimſical form, or in the form of any kind of croſs; a figure the moſt inconvenient, the moſt unſightly, and the moſt expenſive that ever could be invented. A cir-

cle,

cle, an oval, a ſquare, or any other figure, even a triangle would be preferable to a croſs, or even to four croſſes united, as in the church of St. Genivieve. The eſcurial in Spain was built in the form of a gridiron, becauſe it was dedicated to a Saint, who is reported to have been broiled to death; but it is amazing that, in this enlightened age, ſuperſtition ſhould any way interfere with architecture.

The periſtyle of St. Genivieve's church is truly magnificent. It is compoſed of twenty-two Corinthian pillars, fifty-ſeven feet French in height. This periſtyle is adorned with ſome hiſtorical ſculptures in baſſo relievo, of the life and miracles of St. Genivieve; but they do not at all correſpond to the elegant finiſh of the pillars, and the noble aſpect

of

of the periſtyle. The exterior of the church appears very naked and unornamented; and the great maſs of plain wall ſeems a glaring contraſt to the magnificent appearance of the front. The windows appear at the outſide too ſmall in proportion to the building. The window in each corner is contrived ſo, as to form two windows at the inſide, and only one at the outſide: but I think this a littleneſs, and œconomical contrivance, which has nothing of real beauty in it, and is unworthy of a great edifice, where every thing ſhould be grand and magnificently ſimple. The little external doors at the corners under the dome, appear pitiful beyond deſcription. The dome when finiſhed, will not bear any competition as to external appearance, with that of St. Paul's at London; yet muſt look very noble and magnificent,

ficent, on account of its fine and elevated ſituation.

On the great architrave of the periſtyle, upon a nice little plate of white marble, is the following inſcription:

D. O. M.
Sub invoc. S. Genovæfæ Lud. XV.

Yet, for my part, I think that the words of an inſcription on a grand public edifice of this kind, ought to be written at full length, and not clipped, and abbreviated, like a memorandum on the black leaf of a pocket-book.

LETTER

LETTER III.

14th March.

THE church of Notre-Dame in Paris, is one of the richeſt and moſt ſtupendous pieces of Gothic architecture now remaining in the world. The front is one immenſe pile of curious trifles and littleneſſes; all over charged with Gothic window-work, and numberleſs little pillars, angels, men, and hobgoblins crowded upon one another in the moſt wild and extravagant manner: Yet on the whole the front appears awful and venerable, though compoſed of nonſenſe; and gives a true picture of the ſuperſtitious, dark, and bloody age, in which it was built.

On

On entering the church, I ſtopped with aſtoniſhment, on beholding the lofty majeſty and beauty of the inſide. The ſtupendous ogee arches, balanced upon groups of ſlender Gothic pillars, diſpoſed in rows, and ſhot up to an extravagant height, at once charmed me with their boldneſs, and, I may ſay, ſublimity. As I walked along theſe vaſt ayles, formed by rows of one hundred and twenty pillars, ſupporting the vaulted arches at an aſtoniſhing height, I turned my eyes upon myſelf, and ſeemed to dwindle into nothing. Admirable art of man, cried I, of man ſcarce ſix feet high; that from the huge rocks, heavy and ſhapeleſs, torn from the bowels of the earth by hard labor, has formed ſo delicate and noble a ſtructure.

I could ſcarce turn my eyes from the great circular window, which abſolutely

compoſed

compoſed the greater part of the end of one of the principal naves. It was wrought of ſtone, in the moſt elaborate and curious Gothic taſte, like a knot, or a labyrinth; and adorned with painted glaſs, which brightened up by the rays of the evening ſun, rivalled the rainbow in the brilliant tranſparency of the colours. You may conceive ſome idea of it, if ever you have remarked in the fragments of ice a glorious diſplay of colours, which are to the moſt exquiſite colouring of Titian, what the ætherial harmony of the muſical glaſſes is to the coarſer notes of a violin or flute.

The choir is ſhut up on every ſide, ſo that the congregation cannot ſee into it. This is an unmeaning cuſtom in the churches of this country, that the clergy ſhould perform divine ſervice in a choir

out

out of which the people are totally excluded, as if unworthy and profane; as if the ſole uſe of churches was for prieſts to perform their ceremonies, and not for the people to join in prayer and worſhip the Supreme Being, whatever their form of worſhip may be. The choir is chiefly a modern work of regular architecture, compoſed of variegated marbles, and enriched with figures of gilded bronze. There are few things of the kind more ſplendid and rich; yet I think the architects have not diſplayed a true taſte, by building any thing of Roman architecture in the church of Notre-Dame. For the Roman and Grecian architecture, however correct and concordant the proportions may be, appears lumpiſh and heavy, when immediately oppoſed to the extravagant delicacy and lightneſs of a fine Gothic ſtructure. A man ſhould not

plant

plant oaks in a flower garden; nor have the half length of his portrait done with brown crayon, and the reſt painted in colours.

Some architects admire the ſymmetry of the different orders of architecture ranged over one another; but I cannot ſay, I have often perceived a fine effect from ſuch compoſition of the five orders. The palace of the Luxembourg in Paris is counted one of the moſt regular buildings in Europe; and may be looked upon as a maſterpiece in this ſtile of architecture. It is compoſed of three orders. The firſt and loweſt, is Tuſcan; the ſecond Doric; and the third and higheſt is Ionic. The loweſt ſtory of ſtrong and maſſive Tuſcan, appears a noble foundation to the lighter proportions of the Doric; as this latter does

does to the Ionic. But when you move out from the palace, and take the whole building in one point of view, the appearance is not equally beautiful: For three different orders being crowded into the ſame building, the proportions are neceſſarily ſmall, and do not produce that *enſemble magnifique*, with which every one is charmed, on beholding the colonade of the Louvre. Therefore I am of opinion, that ſo far from producing any thing truly beautiful by an incongruous mixture of the Grecian or Roman architecture with the Gothic, we ſeldom even by the moſt ſyſtematical arrangement of two or three regular orders in the ſame front, can produce any thing equal to the majeſty and beauty of one alone. Yet this ſtile has its proper merit; but to repair a Gothic

ſtructure

ſtructure in a modern taſte, is abſolutely deteſtable and abominable, and ſhews, the ſtupid ignorance, want of taſte, and wretched preſumption of the architects.

Though there are abſurdities in the Gothic architecture, yet I think the moderns are wrong totally to exclude it; for there are many monuments in that taſte, which for lightneſs, and delicacy, infinitely exceed any thing that can be attempted, with all the exactneſs of proportion, and all the regularity of the five orders. One of the moſt ſtriking examples of the more light and delicate Gothic ſtile, is the interior of *la Sainte Chapelle* at the *Palais* in Paris. It is ſcarce poſſible to conceive an idea of any thing more elegantly delicate. It

appears

appears on the inſide almoſt one continued window all round. It is really wonderful how they could erect with ſtone ſo curiouſly light and ſlender a piece of architecture.

When Europe began to emerge from an abyſs of war and barbarity, a taſte for the regular orders began to revive. But this revival of ancient ſymmetry at firſt produced the moſt monſtrous abſurdities. For the architects having imbibed an affection for Gothiciſm in their younger days, confounded the regular proportions of the Greek and Roman architectures with the fantaſtical whimſies of the Goths; and thus produced a moſt barbarous ſpecies of building. The town houſe at Paris, built in the reign of Henry II. of France, and the front

front of Northumberland houſe at Charing-croſs, London, are ſtriking examples of this moſt incongruous ſtile.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

Paris, 20th March.

I AM of opinion that the Colonade of the Louvre merits all the praiſes which have been laviſhed upon it by travellers; for it is a truly auguſt and beautiful piece of architecture.

The colonade was built under the direction of Claude Perault, for Lewis XIV. It conſiſts of three advanced fronts, joined together by two periſtyles. Twenty-eight fluted and coupled columns form the gallery, and ſuſtain the architrave, with an equal number of pilaſters againſt the wall within; the intervals between which are adorned with niches. The middle advanced front is

compoſed

compoſed of eight Corinthian columns, crowned with a triangular pediment. Along the ſummit of the colonade is a terrace bordered by a balluſtrade and pedeſtals.

This charming colonade diſplays the very perfection of elegance and taſte. The moſt beautiful piece that architecture can produce, is a fine row of Corinthian pillars. There is ſomething ſo ſublime in it, that when the greateſt painters have endeavoured to repreſent to us the palace of the Gods, they uniformly have drawn grand ranges of columns; as if it were impoſſible for the moſt florid imagination to conceive an idea of more perfect beauty.

Although I ſhould not preſume to cenſure ſo fine an edifice; yet I muſt

ſay,

ſay, that neither the windows under the gallery, nor the great entrance at the center, are ſo captivating as the reſt of the building.

The other parts of the Louvre are far inferior to the colonade, and conſiſt of a variety of beginnings and no endings, and appear to the greateſt diſadvantage when contraſted with the admirable colonade. When a man paſſes through the great gate of the colonade, and ſurveys the interior ſquare of the palace, he cannot help exclaiming, what a falling off is here!

As to the gallery of the Louvre, I can only ſay in its favor, that it probably is the longeſt room in the world, and joins the palace of the Louvre to the palace of the Tuileries.

The palace of the Tuileries originally was complete in itſelf; and conſiſted ſimply of two orders of architecture, one over the other. But in my opinion Lewis XIV. ſpoiled it, by adding two enormous wings to the wings of the palace. Theſe additions are not in the ſame ſtile of architecture with the old palace which ſtands between them; but conſiſt of a ſingle order with pilaſters embracing the entire height; ſo that all conformity is loſt. But what I really abhor, is, that more than barbarous ſtructure the French high roofs; heaped up, and planted with garret windows, ſky-lights, and enormous ſtone chimneys, which altogether give this unfortunate palace a moſt gloomy appearance. The ancient architects of Greece and Italy would ſmile contempt on the French artiſts, to ſee them imitate the moſt admired

mired pieces of ancient architecture, and crown them with a modern ornament, that repreſents nothing more than a heap of ſand, or a boat turned upſide down. When I happen to ſee the Luxembourg palace or Tuileries with their dark ſtupendous roofs, I am reminded of the enormous high crowned hats worn in England and Holland ſome centuries ago, and with which witches are repreſented in pictures and on the ſtage, to make them appear more hideous and unnatural.

LETTER V.

Paris, 22d March.

As you approach this metropolis on the weſt ſide, it appears to its greateſt advantage, and all the principal beauties of the place ſeem to be collected together on purpoſe to aſtoniſh and delight.

You firſt enter through a large iron gate into the groves called the Elyſian fields. As you advance, you perceive right before you the ſquare of Lewis XV. with a noble equeſtrian ſtatue, mounted upon a marble pedeſtal, ſurrounded by a balluſtrade of pure white marble, in the utmoſt taſte. On your left appear two uniform buildings, called

les

les Gardes-meubles; each compoſed of two advanced fronts, united by a colonade of Corinthian architecture, reſembling ſomewhat, though in miniature, the colonade of the Louvre. Oppoſite to the *Gardes-meubles*, the ſquare is bounded by the river Seine; and on the further bank the beautiful *Palais-Bourbon* extends its long wings. It is built in the Italian taſte, only one ſtory high, with a flat roof, and decorated with a balluſtrade and a long row of ſtatues and trophies; and appears ſo elegant, ſo uniform, that the moſt ſtupid cannot help expreſſing their admiration at the ſight. The diſtant gilded dome of the invalids, majeſtically terminates the proſpect.

Advancing through the ſquare of Lewis XV. you enter the gardens of the

Tuileries. At one ſide of the entrance a Mercury on a winged courſer, larger than the life, ſeems to ſpring forward with the greateſt agility. At the other ſide of the entrance is a Fame, ſeated with the utmoſt lightneſs upon a Pegaſus, which impels itſelf forward with all the impetuoſity of a wild and unbridled ſteed; while the oppoſite one appears more like a charger accuſtomed to the bit and regulated by art. Nothing can be ſeen more exquiſitely finiſhed than theſe two ſtatues; each cut out of a ſingle block of white marble by Coyzevox. As you advance a little into the garden bordered on each ſide with terraces, your eyes are in a manner diſtracted by a variety of the moſt beautiful ſtatues. At one place you admire the gigantic ſtatues of river deities. Here the old Tiber, and there the Nile attended

by

by a Sphinx, and ſurrounded by crocodiles and reptiles; both beautiful copies from the antique. Next is the river Marne; and oppoſite is the God of the Seine, attended by a beautiful nymph to repreſent the city of Paris, and a Cupid aſtride upon a ſwan, the wings of which are lined with ſo well imitated a plumage, that you are tempted to ſtroke it with your hand, and are ſurprized to find it hard marble. A little farther on the ſame ſide, Hannibal large as life, ſeems to ſpurn beneath his feet the Roman eagles and ſpoils, and with all the fierce joy of a ſucceſsful barbarian counts the rings of the Roman knights ſlain on the field of battle. At the oppoſite ſide, a Scipio appears to regard him with perſeverance and courage. Next are the four ſeaſons, a copy from the antique of the empreſs

Agrippina; and a moſt admirable Veſtal, modeſty and reſignation appear depicted in her countenance, and her drapery falls in a profuſion of folds with elegance and grace. Advancing a little farther, you perceive on the left, a group of ſtatues larger than the life, cut out of a ſingle block of white marble: The chaſte Lucretia having too much noble pride to ſurvive her diſhonor, plunges a dagger in her boſom; while her huſband Colatinus, with amazement and admiration, ſeizes in vain her hand; and a maid ſupports her as ſhe falls. This excellent morſel is by Theadon. In a group correſponding to this, the pious Æneas bears his father, the aged Anchiſes, on his ſhoulders; while the young Aſcanius looks back for his mother with all the apprehenſion and tenderneſs an infant can expreſs. Next

is

is the rape of Orithea, by Boreas, who appears with all the ferocity and rudeneſs we could expect in the God of ſtorms and hurricanes. Correſponding to this is the rape of Cybele by Saturn, executed by Flamen. One of her nymphs ſpurned beneath the feet of the immortal ſpoiler, rouſes up a ſleeping lion to defend the honor of her miſtreſs, but in vain. The palace of the Tuileries extends itſelf acroſs the garden, and terminates the view.

Turning off by the left pavilion of the palace, you proceed along the quay, by that vaſt pile of building the gallery of the Louvre, which conducts you to the celebrated colonade. On the oppoſite bank of the river you diſcover ſeveral beautiful *hotels* of different noblemen, and the college of Mazarin

opening in a half circle, and crowned with a dome in the center. Somewhat farther on, at the ſame ſide, you diſcover the mint, a moſt regular and beautiful piece of architecture. Here your proſpect is bounded by Pont-neuf, with the equeſtrian ſtatue of Henry IV. Beyond the bridge the houſes and ſpires riſe in mingled proſpect, and the ſtupendous gothic towers of Notre-Dame, appear eminent above the reſt.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

Paris, 26th March.

THE city of Paris is ſurrounded by a circular road, called the *Boulevards*, becauſe ſituated chiefly upon the ramparts or *bulwarks*, thrown up to defend the place againſt the Engliſh in 1536. Theſe *Boulevards* principally conſiſt of three parallel walks, ſhaded with rows of trees. On the city ſide all along theſe beautiful avenues, the eye is entertained with a variety of villas and flower gardens; and on the other ſide a well cultivated country, without ditches or fences, preſents itſelf in a variety of agreeable views. The *Boulevards* are the chief ornament of Paris, and the only things here to compenſate for the want of ſuch extenſive

extenſive ſquares as adorn the Britiſh capital. At preſent the farmers-general are building a great wall all round the city. This wall is on the outſide of the *Boulevards*, and deprives the Pariſians of enjoying a proſpect of the country. The uncleanlineſs of the lower claſs of people in Paris, the narrowneſs and filthineſs of the ſtreets, and the great heighth of the houſes, are more than ſufficient to render the air in ſeveral parts of Paris and its environs, abominably fœtid and highly putrid; but this new great wall muſt increaſe the corruption of the air, by obſtructing every breeze from the country, and annually occaſion the death of thouſands of feeble and aſthmatic perſons. The Pariſians call this wall *le mur de captivité*, the wall of captivity; but a free-born Briton muſt look with contempt and ſcorn on almoſt a million of people,

people, who tamely ſuffer themſelves to be robbed of the right of human nature, of the right to breathe freſh air, and be ſhut up like birds in a cage!

It is aſtoniſhing what a variety of places of amuſement are in Paris; but theſe amuſements are generally of the moſt effeminate, volatile, and trifling nature, and indeed nothing ſhews the genius of the people in a truer light.

You would ſay there is a perfect rage for dancing among all ranks of people. And the peaſants and lower claſs of inhabitants appear to be dancing mad. I aſſure you, that I am delighted to ſee ſo many of my fellow creatures joyful and happy. At every corner in the outlets of Paris, I ſee groups of the peaſants enjoying themſelves in this moſt innocent

and

and agreeable diverſion. Sunday is the principal day among the majority of the people of Paris, and France in general, for dancing and every other ſpecies of amuſement. In England, and of late partly in Ireland, it is the reverſe; and the Lord's day is kept with the moſt rigid auſterity and ſolemn ſadneſs. This ſpecies of devotion appears to have much increaſed within this laſt century; and yet I cannot ſay, that it has occaſioned an improvement in the manners of the people. I think, that the inhabitants of England are naturaly too much diſpoſed to a ſplenetic diſpoſition, and a gloomy melancholy; and therefore ought to be extremely cautious how they increaſe, eſpecially by religious inſtitutions, this ſulkineſs of diſpoſition; for they certainly would be more happy in themſelves, and more amiable without

it.

it. The Sabbath-day is almoſt the only time that the majority of the people can dedicate to perſonal neatneſs and ſocial enjoyment; and for my part I, think, it were ſuppoſing the Divine Being a monſter, to imagine, that he would not be more pleaſed to ſee his creatures happy and delighted, than ſunk in a depth of melancholy and ſulkineſs. In Great Britain, muſic and dancing on the Sabbath-day, are looked upon as abſolutely offenſive to the Deity: and in the ſouth of Ireland, the prieſts have been endeavoring to baniſh all inclination to this harmleſs amuſement from among the peaſantry, and have often frightened the poor ignorant creatures, by telling them, that the Devil himſelf is always in the midſt of them, whenever they meet together to dance. Our peaſantry, it ſhould be allowed, are ſufficiently miſerable,

able, and perhaps even more ſo than the Negroes in the Weſt India Iſlands. For the Negroes live chiefly upon ſugar cane, yams, and fruits, enjoy the pleaſures of love and dancing, and live in a climate of perpetual ſummer; but our common people live chiefly on potatoes, even of which they have not ſometimes enough, and drag on a wretched exiſtence under the moſt impolitic and barbarous oppreſſion, in filthy hovels, and the greater part of the year in wet and cold. It therefore muſt be inhuman and uncharitable to the laſt degree, to deprive the poor wretches of the harmleſs means which kind nature affords them, of making their miſerable exiſtence at all ſupportable. The prieſts alledge that theſe meetings among the peaſants are productive of numberleſs love matches and illicit amours, and therefore ought not

to

to be countenanced. It is probable, that meetings of the kind would be productive of private loves, but they would alſo be productive of marriages; and therefore ought to be encouraged for the propagation of mankind, and the univerſal benefit of the creation. If theſe meetings ſometimes turn to riot and diſorder, why ſhould not the prieſts, inſtead of ſtriving to aboliſh this moſt agreeable, innocent, and uſeful amuſement, preſide in perſon at the meetings; not in the character of divines but as fathers, men of humanity, and gentlemen, to introduce politeneſs and decorum among the common people; which inſtruction being united to pleaſure, would more effectually reclaim their quarrelſome and furious diſpoſition, and make them better members of ſociety and better chriſtians, than all the powers of argument

gument in ſolemn advice from the pulpit. Moſt certainly it were better that our peaſants forget their miſery in ſociable gaiety and innocent amuſement, than in drunkenneſs and raw whiſkey, which ruins their conſtitution, and makes them old before their time; and which very frequently makes them murder one another, and commit the moſt horrid acts of deſperation. Without doubt, the man who, though devout, is ever cogitative and dark, and ſhuns every amuſement, is more to be dreaded, and ſuſpected of brooding ſtratagems and broils, than the perſon who ſeems to think of nothing, and makes his ſhort life agreeable and pleaſant. Brutus, who ſlew Cæſar in the ſenate houſe, is diſcribed by the divine Shakeſpeare, to have been for ſome time before that dreadful inſurrection, remarkably gloomy and

ſullen,

ſullen, avoiding every amuſement, and appearing totally enwrapt in the intention of deſtroying the foremoſt man of all the world. Cæſar ſpeaking of him to Antony, deſcribes him thus:

> He loves no play,
> As thou doſt, Antony: he hears no muſic:
> Seldom he ſmiles; and ſmiles in ſuch a ſort,
> As if he mock'd himſelf, and ſcorn'd his ſpirit
> That could be mov'd to ſmile at any thing.

If it is charity and pleaſing to God, to relieve our fellow creatures from miſery, it ſurely muſt be alſo a charity and ſtill pleaſing to the Divinity, to go a ſtep farther, and render them happy. And I think it incumbent on every gentleman who has tenants, to encourage the innocent amuſement of dancing as much as poſſible, both in pity to our miſerable peaſants, for the propagation of

of inhabitants, and for the peace of ſociety. As to religion and the ſanctity of the Sabbath, I do not conceive how they ſhould at all be offended thereby. If we look back into hiſtory, we ſhall find that from the earlieſt ages religion, dancing, and muſic were frequently united, and indeed, I think, with much reaſon; for if it is pleaſing to the Being of Beings that we make others of his creatures happy, it muſt be pleaſing to him that we who are his creatures be likewiſe happy; but from my ſoul I cannot conceive, how there can be any thing heinous, and diſpleaſing to God, in being delighted and joyful.

LETTER

LETTER VII.

Paris, 10th May.

I have been to ſee the review of the French and Swiſs guards on the plain des Sablons. They are counted the two fineſt regiments of infantry in France. They conſiſt of battalion and grenadiers; but without any company of light-infantry. There is to each regiment a company of what they call *chaſſeurs*; but they do not much reſemble our light infantry, for they do not appear to be the lighteſt and ſmarteſt men of the regiment, and they wear hats and long coats like the battalion.

The queen's ſtate carriages and retinues which paſſed along the line, were

as

as brilliant, rich, tawdry, and heavy as can be imagined. Her majeſty's coach advanced the firſt, appearing almoſt a blaze of gold, ſurmounted by a crown and other ornaments in the richeſt taſte. The unwieldy maſs was hauled along by eight fine greys, all covered with glittering taſſels, oſtriches feathers, and embroidery. The five ſtate carriages that followed, were equally gorgeous, rich, and heavy. When the queen's ſtate coaches had paſſed along the line, the horſeguards on the right, by the harmonious clangor of the trumpets, announced his Majeſty's approach. The King appeared, dreſſed in a ſcarlet uniform, with a bag, blue ribbon, and ſtar, and the huge French jack-boots. He rode a white Barbary ſteed, and was followed by the body guards, and an immenſe crowd of French and foreign nobility,

nobility, who darkened the plain with their numbers, and the heavens with clouds of duſt.

The grenadiers wore moſt towering caps, and looked dreadfully grim with their black whiſkers. On looking a little cloſer, I perceived, that many of their whiſkers, were only ſtripes of black ſilk paſted upon the upper lip. Every private wore falſe curls, ſeemingly of leather or paſteboard, ſtuck to the head on each ſide.

Many of the Swiſs guards were good, luſty looking fellows. The French guards appeared in every reſpect far inferior to them. It appears to me ſomewhat ſtrange, that out of twenty-four or twenty-eight millions of inhabitants in

in France, they could not produce a regiment equal to the Swiſs.

The Swiſs guards wore a ſcarlet uniform ſomewhat like the Britiſh troops; which appeared far more ſprightly than the blue uniform of the French guards, daubed with white tape, and accompanied with long ſcarlet waiſtcoats.

The men were drawn up ſhoulder to ſhoulder, and the ranks ſo cloſe, that I cannot conceive how they could manage their arms without confuſion. Their manual exerciſe ſeemed ſomewhat more conciſe than that at preſent uſed by our infantry.

After the manual exerciſe, the troops began to march. The artillery moved in the van, but the horſes, &c. did not appear

appear either martial or elegant. The multitude of colours were ſo conſiderable, that I believe they had one to every company. Each regiment was attended by a whole hoſt of drummers, but without any fifes. Though the hoarſe noiſe of the drum may ſeem warlike and martial, yet there is ſomething in the accompaniment of the fife, which gives the men alacrity and ſpirit. Several of the drummers and pioniers wore great beards, which divided, hung down like tails on each ſide of the breaſt, and made them cut a more groteſque figure than can be imagined. The officers carried a kind of hand pike, which having no croſs bar, cannot be ſo effectual a defence as our ſpontoon.

In theſe, as well as in the other French regiments, there are almoſt double as

many officers and ſubalterns to each company as in our's. You will think that ſuch a multitude of commanders muſt not only be unneceſſary, but be productive of the greateſt confuſion in the time of action; yet the inſtituting of ſo many officers, was perhaps the beſt policy in the French ſervice; eſpecially as their pay is ſo inferior to our's. It is ſaid, that French officers would lead on to almoſt certain death, if the men would follow; and that the Britiſh ſoldiery would face even hell, if their officers would lead them. I believe there is ſome truth in this remark, and therefore with reaſon the French have crowded their regiments with ſuch a number of commanders. For the French peaſants are in general giddy, weak, and fickle; and a regiment compoſed of ſuch perſons ſhould never be depended upon;

upon; and therefore nothing could be better, than to fill the ranks with as many officers as poſſible; men well inſtructed in their buſineſs, and who would fight through a principle of honor; being firmly perſuaded that it is their duty, and a moſt brilliant action to fight for the glory of the king,

Seeking the bubble reputation
Ev'n in the cannon's mouth,

thereby to ſerve as ſo many ſtays and props to the common ſoldiery: But ſuch a number of officers would be unneceſſary in our troops; for the natural bluntneſs and impetuoſity of the men, are generally ſufficient to make them blind to danger in the time of action.

LETTER VIII.

Paris, 14th May.

THE manufactory of tapeſtry at Paris has long been eſteemed the firſt of the kind in the univerſe; but at preſent, as tapeſtry is not ſo much admired as formerly, the manufactory of the Gobelins has fallen very much. This manufactory is celebrated for the fine, true, and permanent black dyed in it; and alſo for the brilliancy of its ſcarlet. The ſcarlet dye is a compoſition, the principal ingredient of which is the Carthamus or baſtard ſaffron; and the fine glow and brightneſs is communicated to the cloth, by the contact of the air which the dyers endeavour to give it during the procedure. For this purpoſe they have a wooden

a wooden machine, which is turned like a windlaſs, and every inſtant raiſes the cloth out of the dye-ſtuff, and plunges it in again. Thus during the dying, the air has a free acceſs to every part of it, and this proceſs they continue, with unremitting attention, until the cloth has abſorbed the coloring principle, and left the water almoſt limpid. I think it would be worth the attention of ſome philoſophers to try what principle is communicated by the air to the cloth during the dying, which ſo vivifies the ſcarlet: Whether it is the baſis of vital air, of carbonic acid gas, or of the azot in the atmoſphere. If this could be determined, nothing could be eaſier than to ſupply the cloth with the gas moſt ſuitable to it; and thus bring this beautiful color to greater perfection than they have as yet been able

to do in France. If it is the contact of the vital air that is neceſſary, the cloth may be ſupplied with it, by the revivification of metallic calces, or from the green leaves of vegetables; or the manufactory may be ſituated in a wood, far removed from populous cities, and with as few fires in the place as poſſible. If it is the contact of what we improperly call fixed air that is neceſſary, the manufactory may be ſupplied with any quantity of this elaſtic fluid from chalk, by the action of any other acid whatever. In ſhort, a thouſand means may be invented, to ſupply the manufactory with the neceſſary aerial fluid.

I have been informed that it is the water of the little river of the Gobelins, that is the occaſion of the admired brilliancy

liancy of the ſcarlet; but I am not inclined to believe there can be any ſuch virtue in an inſipid ſoft water. Or if their be, a few grains' weight of a ſelenite, ſulphur, an earth, or any other ſubſtance in it, it would not be difficult to analyze the water, and make it far ſuperior to what it otherwiſe would be, by adding a greater quantity of the chymical preparation, or mineral neceſſary to give it the deſired property. But, for my part, I do not think, that the beauty of the ſcarlet is occaſioned by the water; but rather ſuppoſe the idea to have been propagated, on purpoſe to prevent any attempts in rival manufactories. Thus in Great Britain and Ireland, it was long thought impoſſible to make as good porter as at London, without the water of the Thames; but at preſent our manufacturers are convinced, that

nothing could be more abſurd than ſuch an opinion. I was highly entertained at the manufactory of the Gobelins with ſeveral beautiful pieces of tapeſtry of the moſt vivid and glowing colours. I think that the art of transferring the colouring principle from certain vegetable and animal ſubſtances to cloth of wool, ſilk, &c. and of fixing the colour when transferred, is curious to admiration, and muſt afford infinite entertainment to ſuſceptible minds. The dyers, like moſt other tradeſmen, are perſons of very circumſcribed knowledge, and acquire ſome proficiency in their art merely by routine; and yet if ever there was an art requiring the aſſiſtance of theory, it is this; and if ſome gentlemen of chemical knowledge and ingenuity, were to inſpect and ſimplify the methods uſed in the different

rent manufactories of dying, their ſucceſs would be even prodigious. The dyers frequently mix a variety of ſubſtances together; and by filtering, evaporating, compounding, &c. generally execute their deſigns; yet are abſolutely ignorant of what it is they do. Thus they often practiſe the moſt complex, extravagant, tedious, and expenſive methods, to produce the moſt ſimple effects; and which often may be performed much better in an inſtant, without labor or expence, if they did but know what it is they do.

The king's manufactory of porcelaine at Seve, near Paris, is very ſumptuous and magnificent. It was in this manufacture alone that the artiſts of Japon and China could excel the Europeans. The beauty and permanence of their

porcelaine when firſt it appeared, made it be univerſally admired. Different ſovereigns became envious of the Aſiatics, and eſtabliſhed rival manufactories of this delicate ware in their own countries. The manufactories eſtabliſhed in Pruſſia, Sweden, France, England, and Italy, after a few years, began to produce different ſpecies of porcelaine, eaſily diſtinguiſhable from one another, and remarkable for ſeparate beauties; but not one of them on the whole equal to the fineſt porcelaine of Japon or China. Thus, notwithſtanding all our boaſted knowledge of chemiſtry, we have long been excelled by the illiterate idolaters of the Eaſt. A Jeſuit, who was a miſſionary at China, was the firſt who ſent home a good deſcription of the method of fabricating the porcelaine. He likewiſe ſent to Europe ſpecimens of the two kinds

kinds of earth uſed in making it of an extreme whiteneſs; the one called in the Chineſe language kaolin, and the other petunzs. The European chemiſts immediately perceived, that one was a vitrifiable earth, and the other a pure kind of clay or argillaceous earth. Theſe two earths being reduced to an impalpable powder, and mixed together, and after other neceſſary preparation, expoſed to a violent degree of heat, cement and become the moſt beautiful porcelaine. The vitrifiable earth, after ſupporting for ſome time an intenſe heat, liquifies into a fluid glaſs, and glues together the white and opaque particles of the argillaceous earth, and thus produces that half tranſparence or mixture of tranſparence and opacity, ſo much admired in the fine China ware.

In ſome of the European manufactories, they made uſe only of a vitrifiable

able earth, which they expoſed to a gradual heat, and when it became half vitrified took it from the fire; endeavouring in this manner to give it that half tranſparency ſo much admired. But this method ſeldom anſwered their expectations. It required the utmoſt care to ſtop the fire at the inſtant in which the vitrification was ſufficiently advanced; which could not always be done; and even when they were ſo lucky as to give the porcelaine its proper degree of tranſparence, it was ſtill always too brittle and glaſſy, and ſeldom capable of ſuſtaining the ſudden heat of boiling water.

In the manufactory at Seve, they, at leaſt pretend, to uſe only an argillaceous earth; and though we know that this earth has the property of forming a paſte

paſte with water, and becoming extremely hard and denſe by expoſure to a violent heat, yet it never acquires the ſemi-tranſparence of Aſiatic porcelaine. Therefore all the ware of Seve, though it excels in gilding and the elegance of the drawings, always appears gritty and opaque, though extremely white; and is eaſily diſtinguiſhable from the porcelaine of Sweden, which ſeems to be ſomewhat on the other extreme.

LETTER

LETTER IX.

Paris, 16th May.

THE king's library in Paris is open to the public twice a week. I am told it is ſuperior to the library of the Vatican for the number of volumes, which amount to about two hundred thouſand.

In one of the vaſt avenues of books in the king's library, is a mount Parnaſſus in bronze; where Corneille, Racine, Voltaire, &c. are ſeated according to their ſuppoſed merits. Corneille appears in the dreſs of a tragic hero, and in the attitude of an Apollo, near the ſummit of the rock; while others ſcarce able to keep their places, ſeem ready to fall into the abyſs of oblivion. Neither Shake-

ſpear,

ſpear, nor Milton, nor any of our poets, are honoured with a place on this little Parnaſſus.

I was yeſterday in the cabinet of antiquities and natural hiſtory, belonging to the abbey of St. Genivieve. I there peruſed the ſtamps with which the Paduans coined their celebrated counterfeit medals, which imitated ſo well the antique, as to deceive almoſt every virtuoſo in Europe.

It is almoſt incredible what a profuſion of curious coins and medals are every day brought for ſale by our peaſants in Ireland to the ſilverſmiths. The illiterate workmen never take the trouble to decypher the inſcriptions; and as ſoon as they have amaſſed a conſiderable quantity of medals, metamorphoſe them into

to different articles for ſale; and thus the moſt curious medals of ancient ſovereigns and ſtates, which perhaps if inſpected, would throw the greateſt light upon chronology, and the events of remoteſt hiſtory, are often hammered into ſome ignoble domeſtic utenſil. I wiſh there were a ſociety eſtabliſhed to appoint certain perſons in every city, to give double the weight in money for all coins, and antique trinkets brought for ſale by the peaſants. This would likewiſe entice the ſilverſmiths to preſerve their coins, finding it their intereſt to do ſo.

LETTER

LETTER X.

Paris, 20th May.

I Never ſee any of the French ladies dreſſed in riding-habits, which they call here, with reaſon, *habillée en Amazone*. Some time ago the French ladies, as I am informed, made ſome attempts to introduce this Engliſh faſhion, but the experiment did not ſucceed; and yet there is no European dreſs which diſplays the ſhape of a fine woman to more advantage. The French ladies ſeldom go on horſeback, and when they do, they generally ride like the men; but though this method is certainly more ſafe, convenient, and natural, it does not appear ſo agreeable to the modeſty of the fair-ſex, as to ſit on a ſide-ſaddle.

The

The French women are far more eſtimable as women, than their huſbands as men; and this is at any rate an unqueſtionable fact. There is not a nation in Europe, that has not produced heroes and philoſophers at leaſt equal to Frenchmen; but there are not many countries in the univerſe, more celebrated for heroines, and female philoſophers, than France. The blood and horror of war is oppoſite to the ſoft nature of woman; yet France has produced fair-ones, who have vanquiſhed this natural weakneſs, and amidſt the tumult of arms, by more than manly courage and valour, have gained honour and admiration. Even in the remote ages of hiſtory, we find mention of celebrated female warriors in France. I need not mention the celebrated maid of Orleans. And in literature, the world is acquainted with

Meſdames

Meſdames Dacier, des Houllers, de Sevigné, Scudery, Chatlet, &c.

Whatever merit the French ladies in ſome reſpects may have, I muſt ſay, that they poſſeſs neither the modeſty nor delicacy of our fair-ones. I have ſeen well dreſſed women in the public gardens, turn a little behind the trees and caſcade, while their gallants would attend entertaining them with ſoft nonſenſe. How one of our fair creatures would bluſh, ſhould her lover ſurprize her in ſuch a ſituation! The converſation happened to roll on this ſubject in a company where I yeſterday was. A French young lady was exceedingly diverted with the idea of the *innocence* of our Iriſh fair-ones, and replied with a great deal of vivacity, *au contraire, Mr. l'Anglois, je ſerois bien fachée, ſi mon amant*

amant me croiroit incapable de ——— I muſt own, the oratory of a pretty woman is always very perſuaſive, and for a moment I was her proſelyte, and did not heſitate to ſmile at the ſqueamiſhneſs of our women. What, ſaid I, they are not aſhamed to eat and drink, and yet would be overwhelmed with confuſion, if they were detected performing other offices that are equally natural, and that every one knows they muſt do. But at preſent I am of a different opinion: there is no pretty woman here to bribe me with a ſmile; in ſhort, I am unprejudiced, and cannot help admiring the charming reſerve of our fair-ones, that adds a dignity to love. It is amiable nature that teaches them this fine feeling, and myſterious delicacy; which are not the weakeſt arms they make uſe of to enſlave us. In the countries where

where the women have worn off this purity of manners, we always find, they have very little regard for their chaſtity, and therefore become deſpiſed by the men. In France, for example, native innocence and chaſtity are frequently turned into ridicule; and we can perceive by many of their favourite ſongs and poems, that marriage is looked upon as a mere jeſt. There is no nation where the married women have leſs chaſtity, or leſs regard for their huſbands; nor where the huſbands have leſs concern for their diſhonour, and therefore leſs eſteem for their wives. A man who without emotion, perceives his wife to center her affections in another object, muſt have but little regard for her favours, or herſelf; and indeed, violent jealouſy can never be felt, but by

by ſuch as violently love; and in a country where the women are moſt unchaſte, and yet where jealouſy is ſcarce known, they may be gallant, but they cannot truly love.

LETTER

LETTER XI.

Paris, 20th May.

NATURE has not been ſo laviſh of beauty here, as in Ireland. Yet though the fair-ones are not exceſſively beautiful in this part of Europe, they poſſeſs a vivacity and ſprightlineſs that force a man to like them, and find himſelf happy in their company. All that airs, dreſs, and coquetry can add, to make them agreeable and captivating, is poſſeſſed by them in a ſuperlative degree. They are univerſally polite, and enjoy an eternal flow of good humor, and walk with an eaſy elegance and dignity that I have ſeldom ſeen elſewhere.

The

The fair ſex in moſt countries are deprived of a knowledge of the polite arts, and literature in general. We ſuppoſe that as it has been the caſe ſince the earlieſt ages, it is dictated by nature. Yet I cannot perſuade myſelf to think ſo, for nature has given to the moſt beautiful part of the creation a mind capable of improvement, and infinitely more delicate feelings, and as it appears to me a talent for a more perſuaſive oratory than to men. The foundations of theſe cuſtoms have been laid when *lamh laidir an uactar* was the only law that governed the actions and ſentiments of men. As it is difficult to recede from eſtabliſhed prejudices, we as yet continue to abandon the fair ſex to the moſt trifling of ſtudies. We alſo totally debar them of all civil employments, as if they were incapable of acting rationally

tionally and juſtly; and yet, inconſiſtent as we are, the firſt office in the empire, the ſceptre is often ſwayed by a female; and we have no reaſon to regret having had Queen Elizabeth.

Every French nobleman takes a pride in having a Swiſs to ſtand as porter at his gate. And not without reaſon; for they are the cleverest and luſtieſt fellows I have ſeen in France. It is very remarkable, that the inhabitants of mountainy countries are more vigorous and better made than the inhabitants of extenſive plains; and yet it is the reverſe in reſpect to kine and horſes, for theſe animals are more robuſt and larger bodied in the champaign countries, but degenerate into a dwarfiſh breed upon the hills. This induces me to think, that violent exerciſe is neceſſary to the

nature of man. Perhaps much may be cauſed by the great rarity, lightneſs, and purity of the atmoſphere upon hills; which may be more agreeable to our particular ſpecies, than the more denſe, humid, and weighty atmoſphere of the low grounds. It is ſaid, that the rickets are more common among the children who inhabit mountainy countries, than among others, and that this diſorder is more frequent in Switzerland and Scotland, than in any other part of Europe. This appears to me altogether unaccountable and ſtrange.

The generality of people here are not within many degrees ſo athletic and well made, as the inhabitants of Ireland; and the contraſt between an Iriſh and a French peaſant is really very remarkable. A variety of circumſtances con-

cur

cur to produce this difference in the ſpecies; but I think, that the diet alone of the French peaſants, is ſufficient to reduce them to their preſent ſtandard. The French ſend moſt of their good wines abroad, and retain the inferior ſorts for their domeſtic conſumption. The poor French wines are ſharp and acid, and having but little body, are by no means ſo nutritive as milk or beer. Beſides, the French peaſants eat great quantities of ſalad; which I am inclined to think, can never afford any thing but an acid and unwholeſome chyle; for a raw, watery vegetable, with an incongruous mixture of oil, ſalt, vinegar, and ſpice, can never be agreeable to the nature of man; and a continual uſe of ſuch a compoſition muſt be highly detrimental. Through œconomy they likewiſe univerſally eat ſoup at dinner; which muſt blunt their appe-

tites, and hinder them from eating any thing more ſubſtantial. It was never deſigned by nature that men ſhould take their principal nouriſhment in a liquid form. We know that thoſe who for want of teeth are obliged to receive their principal nouriſhment in things of the nature of ſoups, &c. are never ſo healthy and ſtrong, as when they chew their food. We know to a certainty, that the great quantity of ſaliva which we ſwallow in the maſtication of our meat, is neceſſary to its digeſtion; but when we take our nouriſhment in a liquid form, we ſwallow but little ſaliva, and conſequently are not nouriſhed as nature intended: beſides, a quantity of warm liquid muſt tend to relax the ſtomach and enfeeble the powers of digeſtion. Add to this, that the French ſtew their meat to an exceſs, that renders it ſapleſs and dry, and very indigeſtible;

geſtible; though perhaps nature never intended that we ſhould dreſs our meat at all; and therefore we hear the French continually complaining of indigeſtions; and in Ireland, where the French ſay we eat our meat half raw, we rarely hear of any ſuch diſorder at all. The quantity of ſpices which the French take in their ragouts and fricaſſees, muſt be unneceſſary in a temperate climate, and injure the conſtitution.

I am of opinion, that the French would be much ſuperior to what they are in arts and ſciences, if they nouriſhed themſelves as nature intended and requires; for there is ſuch a ſympathy between the mind and body, that whenever the latter is enfeebled, the former generally ſuffers likewiſe. Man, like every other creature, muſt degenerate,

when the food he takes is inadequate to the ſupport of all the animal functions, and does not afford a generous nouriſhment to the vaſcular ſyſtem, and to the fountain or focus of the nerves, I may ſay, to the ſpirit, or if you will, to the *ſenſorium commune*. The worthy poet Fenton had reaſon to ſay,

> But the bold Briton ne'er in earneſt dines
> Without ſubſtantial haunches and ſir-loins:
> In wit, as well as war, they give us vigor;
> Creſſy was loſt by kickſhaws and ſoup-meagre.

Were the French inclined to nouriſh themſelves like Engliſhmen, the conſequences muſt be dreadful, for in that proportion France does not produce proviſion for its inhabitants for more than nine months in the year; and conſequently vaſt multitudes ſhould emigrate or die of famine. For the proportion

tion of inhabitants in France is too great for the produce of the country; and it ſeemingly has frequently been ſo; for France, like a beehive, has often teemed with inhabitants, who at different periods have deſerted their country, and poured like a torrent into Italy and Greece. And when theſe emigrations have not taken place for a ſeries of years, proviſions have become ſo ſcarce in France, and the deſperation of the people ſo horrible, that no man could believe it, unleſs we had the moſt incontrovertible hiſtorical proof. They have even hunted men and women in the woods like deer, to kill and eat them, and this not many centuries ago. At Bonne, an innkeeper cut up and ſerved at table to his gueſts, the bodies of twenty unhappy perſons who had been purſued and killed, and kept their

ſkulls as trophies for ſome time afterwards! After a ſevere froſt, and in the time of anarchy and civil war, we ſometimes have had a ſcarcity of proviſions in Ireland; but either from the ſmall proportion of inhabitants, or the fertility of our ſoil, and the ſupply of fiſh from our rivers, and the ſea all round us, we never have had an inſtance of any ſuch dreadful famine as this I mention. Man, like every vegetable and animal, after ſome generations either degenerates or adapts himſelf to the nature of the ſoil in which he is. Thus in France the inhabitants ſeemingly through a kind inſtinct, conſume as little animal food as poſſible. And indeed in another reſpect it is happy for them, eſpecially in their large cities; for were they to make uſe of ſuch quantities of animal food as the Engliſh, the poorer ſort of people

people are ſo abſolutely filthy, that Paris, and many other cities in France, would be ſo many inexhauſtible ſources of peſtilential diſeaſes, and perhaps of contagions that have not as yet been experienced by mankind.

Singular as the idea may appear to you, I think it would be of infinite benefit to France in general, were the king to publiſh his arrêt expreſsly forbidding any of his ſubjects to eat ſoup; that thereby they may grow healthier and more robuſt, which ſurely are conſiderations of the greateſt importance to a ſovereign. And yet it is probable that ſuch an arrêt would meet with the moſt violent oppoſition, and the king would find it eaſier for him to make them forſake their loyalty than their beloved ſoup.

The uſe of tea is every day becoming more and more general in France; and I am of opinion, that if it ever becomes as univerſal in France as in England, its effects upon the perſons and ſpirits of the people will be aſtoniſhing. For if to their preſent kind of diet they add a daily uſe of a conſiderable quantity of a warm watery infuſion, they muſt become more emaciated and weakly than they are. It is probable that a very ſtrong infuſion of ſuch a bitter herb as tea, may have a tonic action upon the nerves of the ſtomach; but when diluted with a great quantity of warm water, muſt have a contrary effect, induce a ſtate of debility, and relax the whole frame; but, at any rate, can afford very little nouriſhment to the human body.

LETTER

LETTER XII.

Paris, 27th May.

THE newest and most remarkable building in Paris is the Palais-royale: It is the center of fashion, elegance and amusement.

The ancient part of the Palais-royale was built by Cardinal Richelieu. At his death he bestowed it on the king; and after some time it fell into the hands of the Duke of Orleans. It is situated in the rüe St. Honoré, in the best inhabited part of the town. The space of ground behind the palace is in form a parallelogram, and formerly was a garden much resorted to by genteel company. Some years ago the present

Duke

Duke of Orleans formed a deſign to prolong the palace, and ſurround the entire garden with the building, thereby to form a moſt magnificent ſquare. As ſo great an edifice would be too large for the reſidence of any prince, and as the expence would be very great, he formed the deſign of letting it to private perſons; foreſeeing that ſo elegant a place, with every amuſement to excite the attention of the public, would in a ſhort time become the rendezvous of all the beau monde, and that he would be indemnified by the rent of the ſhops and apartments. At firſt the French exclaimed againſt it, and ſaid it was unworthy of a prince to ſet his palace to ſhopkeepers, &c. but at preſent they have reaſon to thank him for one of the greateſt ornaments of Paris.

The

The garden is ſurrounded by an uniform building in right lines, adorned with fluted pilaſters in the compoſite order, of about thirty feet in height. The whole is ſurmounted with a baluſtrade and pedeſtals, with urns, which overtopping the trees form a line of the moſt elegant uniformity. On a level with the garden a piazza extends all round, conſiſting of ſome hundred uniform arcades, where the Pariſians roll in crowds at night and in wet weather. The piazza is lined with rows of the richeſt ſhops in Paris; jewellers, milliners, &c. rival one another in the ſplendor of their ſhops, and the brilliant arrangement of their merchandiſes. The hotels, coffee houſes, and theatres, likewiſe add to the allurements of the place.

The aſpect of the ſquare is really very fine; yet I think it were poſſible

to

to plan it in a more eligible ſtile. The corniſh is heavy beyond all meaſure; and the effect of the urns and baluſters is loſt on account of a large lumpiſh French roof, with pitiful garret windows, which reigns over all the building. This kind of roof is what the French call *la manſarde*, the top of which is nearly flat, and the ſides nearly perpendicular. The ſmall ſquare windows in the entablature take off much from the uniformity, with which even the leaſt judicious eye would be pleaſed in that part of the architecture. The pilaſters are of the compoſite order, and embrace the entire height; yet if ever an edifice ought to be built in different orders, or conſiſting of two ſtories of the ſame order, it was this; for the clipped trees completely hide the under half of the building, ſo that one can diſcover only the upper half of the pilaſters,

whereby

whereby all proportion is loſt; but if the edifice was of the Ionic and Corinthian, the Ionic would reach juſt above the trees, and the Corinthian would be entirely viſible, and produce a very fine effect, the inferior order being in a manner buried in the green branches of the trees. But at any rate, the Palais-royale is far ſuperior to any thing of the kind in Europe.

The firſt time I ſaw the Palais-royale was at night. Imagine to yourſelf a large ſquare planted with rows of clipped trees, and encloſed by an uniform white building, and the loweſt ſtory compoſed of a gallery of arcades; and in every arch a pendant lamp, forming a beautiful illumination, like a circle of twinkling ſtars, while the ſhops diffuſe a fainter light through all the piazza; and the reſt of the building being

being obſcured by the darkneſs of the night, the eye beholds nothing but one continued range of illuminated arcades, crowded with perſons of both ſexes in eternal motion and prattling gaiety.

Were a man inclined to philoſophize, he could find infinite entertainment and matter of ſpeculation, in the variety of faces and figures, that every inſtant preſent themſelves in the Palais-royale. Yeſterday, being a very fine day, the concourſe of people at the Palais-royale was very conſiderable. While I was much amuſed, on beholding ſuch an aſſembly of people of various figures and dreſſes, on a ſudden the lightening flaſhed, and the heavens precipitately let fall a ſhower of rain, or rather a ſheet of

of water; and in an inſtant a thouſand parapluis and paraſols, like butterflies, ſpread out their gaudy wings, and formed a teſtudo impenetrable to the rain. Nothing could equal the general confuſion of the company; and the ladies and gentlemen ſtriving to get to different parts of the piazza, in a kind of tumult, impeded one another. For my part, I was entangled in the crowd, and got a ſevere ducking; but was quite contented to have ſeen the univerſal and ridiculous uproar. The chairs with which the garden was crowded were overturned; the ladies loſt their favorite lapdogs in the crowd, which, kicked and trodden upon, yelped in concert with the general tumult. The gentlemen, who endeavoured to ſave their ſilk cloaths without paying too much attention to the fair ladies, finding they mutually

tually impeded one another, began to argue, with all the politeneſs, fire, and fretfulneſs, peculiar to Frenchmen: Every one ſpeaking, and ſtamping with a kind of fury, nobody liſtening, and the rain falling all the time.

A Turk, who from the ferocity of his mien, and the enormity of his whiſkers, appeared to be a baſhaw of three tails, no doubt amuſing himſelf with his remarks on the frippery of the Europeans, happened to be preſent when the general earthquake, if I may ſo call it, commenced. His attendants, who probably were Janiſſaries, paid very little reſpect to the ladies, and endeavoring to open a paſſage for their maſter, ſhoved and overturned every thing in their way with more than Britiſh gravity; and tumbled chairs, paraſols,

petits-

petits-maitres, lap-dogs, and chapeaux-bras, in the wildeſt chaos and confuſion.

The ſhower ceaſed; and in counting from the beginning to the end, all things in the ſpace of five minutes, their *wonted face renew'd.*

LETTER

LETTER XIII.

Paris, June 1ſt.

SINCE my laſt I have been to ſee the proceſſion of blue ribbons at Verſailles. I ſaw the king and knights paſs through the apartments with black mantles and the inſignia of the order; but the whole did not appear very brilliant, and fell far ſhort of my expectations.

The apartments of Verſailles are grand and rich to exceſs; but many of them appear old and gloomy. The windows are compoſed of ſmall panes in the old faſhion, and, like all the windows in France, open to each ſide like folding doors. After the great gallery, the ſtatues and the paintings, the moſt remarkable

markable things in the apartments are the throne and the ſtate beds. The beds are ſumptuous beyond all deſcription, and the throne is a perfect blaze of gold. And yet there is ſomething more truly grand and awfully majeſtic, at leaſt to my taſte, in the old coronation chair laid up in Weſtminſter-abbey, rotten and Gothic, with the antique legendary ſtone, than all the ſplendor and gilding of a modern throne. Her majeſty's bed is ſo lofty, that a ſtep-ladder is placed by it, to enable her to climb into bed.

In my former letters I have not made any mention of the palace of Verſailles. It is a ſubject ſo often touched upon, that very little is left for me to ſay; and for a minute deſcription of the apartments, gardens, ſtatues, paintings, &c.

I muſt

I muſt refer you to the books which ſpeak of them in particular; from which books I had learned ſuch great ideas of Verſailles, that I was very much diſappointed when I ſaw it.

As you approach Verſailles by the great avenue from Paris, it appears ſo extenſive as to reſemble more a city than the palace of a king; yet too complex to afford an uniform and ſtriking view. The high roof of the chapel on one ſide, takes off much from the uniformity of the building, and yet the roof of the chapel ſhews nothing of real beauty or architecture, and is a mere gilded gingerbread piece of work.

The orangery is a noble maſs of Tuſcan architecture; and the erecting of the no leſs than tremendous ſtair caſes on each

each ſide, muſt have required prodigious ſums of money. And yet they appear to me ridiculous; for, like the pyramids of Egypt, they are works of enormous expenſe and labor, and of no utility. They appear to be made rather for elephants than for men. It is ſhameful that ſuch ſumptuous edifices ſhould be erected to keep a few ſenſeleſs orange trees during the winter, and that many of the poorer inhabitants of this country have not a place to lay their heads in.

At the *ménagérie* I ſaw nothing very intereſting, more than a zebra, a very fine pelican, and a rhinoceros. I ſaw no elephant; and every thing appeared ruinous and neglected.

As we were walking in the gardens near the eaſt wing of the palace, one of the

the guards cried aloud to us, "*Meſſieurs, voila le Prince, otez vos chapeaux s'il vous plait!*" We immediately took off our hats, that we ſhould not appear uncommon. We ſuppoſed the king was in the garden; but on advancing ſomewhat nearer to the palace, we perceived the young Dauphin with his ſiſter amuſing themſelves at play within a little encloſure. I looked around, and perceived, not only the company with whom I was, but all the French of every quality within a conſiderable circle, with their heads uncovered, in reſpect to two children who were building a baby-houſe on the ſand.

LETTER

LETTER XIV.

Paris, 2d June.

HAVING taken a curſory view of the palace of Verſailles, we went to ſee the chateau of Trianon. It is ſituated near the great pond, and may be looked upon as a ſummer-houſe to the extenſive gardens of Verſailles. At the palace of Verſailles I was amazed with the glitter of every thing ſumptuous and grand, and a diſplay of guards and equipages; but at Trianon all appeared rural, elegant, and neat. I may compare Verſailles to the gaudy ſplendor of a peacock, and Trianon to the more lovely little bird of Paradiſe.

This beautiful and finiſhed piece of architecture is low, with a flat roof, and

ſurmounted with a baluſtrade and pedeſtals. It conſiſts of two advanced pavilions, united by a colonade of Ionic pillars of the fineſt variegated marbles. The gardens beyond the palace, with the green woods, and ſky appearing through the interſtices of the colonade, give the whole an air of lightneſs and elegance that is really enchanting, and far beyond any thing of the kind I have ever ſeen.

The ſituation of Verſailles was very ill choſen, being a mere flat, and the adjacent country, notwithſtanding all that art and kingly power could do, appears dry and barren. You ſee no hills and valleys carpeted with verdure, no meandring ſtreams, no cataracts, no river, no extended ocean, no blue mountains; but inſtead of theſe inimitable beauties

ties of nature, you behold a ſimple plain, laid out in parallel and right angled walks of white ſand, and a large pond in the center, edged with hewn ſtone, in the form of a croſs, with four or five feet depth of ſtagnant water; and alſo a number of other ſmaller ponds, mathematically ſquared or rounded, and a profuſion of evergreens clipped into the form of haycocks and goblets, and interſperſed with white ſtatues. The gardens of Verſailles put me in mind of the picture of the goddeſs of love drawn by a certain painter, in which not being able to repreſent her in all the charms of nature and youth, he reſolved to make her rich, and therefore covered her with embroidery. Thus they have taken the greateſt pains, and ſpared no expence, to render the gardens of Verſailles the firſt in the world; and if poſſible

compenſate for the abſence of natural beauty, by the works of art; but I think much in the ſtile of the ancient Picts, who painted their bodies with repreſentations of the moon and ſtars, to heighten their natural beauty. In ſhort, every thing in the gardens of Verſailles is ſquared and angled into the moſt inſipid regularity, and, as Pope ſays,

> Grove nods to grove, each alley has a brother,
> And half the plat-form juſt reflects the other.

In my opinion, the ſituation of a palace or building of any kind is one of the principal things to be conſidered; for if the ſituation is not agreeable, we may laviſh immenſe ſums of money, without being able to produce any thing equal to the romantic charms of rural nature. Lewis XIV. expended enormous

mous treaſures, to render Verſailles as his cotemporaries call it, a terreſtrial paradiſe. He has made Verſailles a very great and magnificent palace, but by no means equally agreeable. I would rather ſpend my life even in an old Gothic caſtle in a romantic ſituation, with rocks and woods, and cataracts around me, than in all the formal grandeur and ſtupid regularity of Verſailles. Rouſſeau ſomewhere ſays, that grandeur is always attended with ſomething gloomy; and he had reaſon to ſay ſo.

We had for a long time followed the ſame ſtile in gardening as the French; and it was common to all Europe. Mr. Addiſon has ſpoken very much in his Spectator againſt the ridiculous cuſtom in his days, to cut trees into the repreſentations of dragons and giants, ſup-

poſing there was more beauty in ſuch pitiful figures, than in the fine extended branches of a natural tree. This cuſtom appears to me ſomewhat ſimilar to that of ſome tribes of ſavages on the coaſt of Africa, who break the bridges of their noſes, and imagine that in ſo doing they rectify nature, and improve their beauty.

Our taſte for gardening within theſe few years is very much improved. The Engliſh, who moſt deſervedly inherit freedom and liberty, ſeem to take a pleaſure to extend it even to the vegetable race. I have read in ſome French authors, that the Engliſh took their taſte for gardening from the Chineſe: But this I cannot totally allow; for the Chineſe gardens are not ſimply a rural and profuſe aſſemblage of the moſt beautiful ſubjects of vegetable nature, but often a heap

heap of trifles and frivolities, of wooden flowers painted, of winged ſerpents, wooden bells, and other nicknacks of the ſame kind. Though the Chineſe fret-work is whimſically delicate enough, yet I think the Gothic ſtile offers us an infinity of ornaments well adapted to gardens in the modern taſte, and more agreeable to reaſon than the green crocodiles, harpies and pagods which ſo much abound in the Chineſe order of architecture, or rather no order at all.

LETTER XV.

Paris, 3d June.

HAVING ſatiated our curioſity with every thing remarkable in the gardens, late in the evening we went to St. Germain, a few miles from Verſailles, and remained there for the night. In the morning we went to take a view of the palace, where Seamus-a-cocha ſpent the latter part of his life. The edifice is large and noble, incloſing a court of a triangular form. It appears to have been built at different times. The under ſtory is of ſtone, and reſembles the antient Gothic caſtes. The three ſuperior ſtories ſeem to be more modern, and are interſected with lines of red brick, which give the chateau a very ſprightly appearance.

appearance. A balcony reigns all round the palace, ſo that from one window a perſon may walk all round the chateau on the ſame ſtory, and enjoy an uncommonly fine proſpect without paſſing through any of the apartments.

At each angle of the palace are pavilions higher than the reſt of the edifice, which having flat roofs, and being ſurmounted by a baluſtrade and pedeſtals, appears on the whole noble and majeſtic. The ſtairs are of ſtone and ſpiral as in the old caſtles in Ireland. The apartments are ſpacious and grand, though ruinous and old.

The terrace of St. Germain is near a mile in length; on one ſide is a grove, and on the other a moſt delightful proſpect of the river Seine, and a great ex-

tent of country covered with vineyards and corn-fields, and every where ſet thick with villages and the ſpires of country churches.

On one end of the terrace of St. Germain is a ſmall building belonging to the comte d' Artois, called Chateau-neuf. It is quite in the old French taſte, only one ſtory high, and loaded with a huge, dark, high roof. I am aſtoniſhed that there can exiſt a man ſo loſt to taſte in this age of refinement, as to laviſh money on buildings the moſt deteſtably ugly. And, indeed, this Chateau-neuf ſeems to be erected here, merely to put its deformity in contraſt with its admirable ſituation. If the charming chateau de Trianon was here, it would be a paradiſe upon earth.

Leaving

Leaving St. Germain, we paſſed by the pretty little painted chateau of Marly, to ſee the celebrated machine which ſupplies Verſailles with water from the river Seine. I ſhall not tire you with a deſcription of this elaborate piece of work; for you can find very minute deſcriptions of it in different books. It is the moſt complex affair you can imagine; an infinity of ſprings, wheels, pullies, ropes, and hinges are eternally at work; ſo that I think, to underſtand it well, a man of an ordinary capacity ſhould ſpend ſome years of his life.

The ſcreeching and jarring of the huge irons, chains, bars, and bolts, produced a noiſe far harſher than I can deſcribe; 'twas frightful—horrible as hell! And the very hoarſe roar of the waters ſeemed pleaſant muſic, in compariſon to the ſlapping

ſlapping and grating of the ſprings and wheels which

——clashing bray'd
Horrible diſcord.

The machine altogether is intolerably intricate; the variety of pumps, locks, ſuckers, ſluices, &c. often impede one another; for when one fails it interferes with a thouſand others. The machine is always repairing, yet never is in thorough repair; and prodigious ſums are laviſhed to keep it in any repair at all. I do not think the water drawn out of the Seine at Marly, to ſupply the palace of Verſailles, can be very pure, after receiving in its paſſage all the abominable filth of Paris, and eſpecially a deluge of corruption from the hoſpital of Hotel-Dieu. The French ſay, the machine at Marly is a *chef d' œuvre*; but for my part I cannot admire any thing

of

of the kind that is ſo intolerably expenſive, and requires ſuch continual attention; and all this, merely to tranſport the cheapeſt and moſt common thing in nature. It rather ſhews the imprudence of the ſovereign, who ſhould have brought his palace to the river, and not the river to his palace.

LETTER

LETTER XVI.

Paris, 12th June.

ON Corpus-Chriſti day the face of all Paris was changed: My ears were ſtunned with church muſic, and my eyes were entertained with proceſſions through all parts of the town.

The doors were all ſhut, and the noiſe of buſineſs and tumultuous uproar of carriages and horſes were for once ſuſpended. The ſtreets were lined with tapeſtry; and at every ſquare and public place altars were erected, adorned with pillars, canopies, fringes of gold, with jewels, flowers, &c. ſplendid and beautiful beyond deſcription.

The

The altars erected about the Fauxbourg St. Martin, were admirable for their elegance and taſte. Thoſe in the other parts of the town were rich in gold and jewels, and the ſplendor of embroidery; but theſe were far ſuperior in delicate, yet ſimple elegance. They were compoſed of flowers ſuch as the ſeaſon produced, knitted together in ſuch a manner, as by the variety of their figure and colour, to repreſent the flutings, volutes, and all the curious beauties we obſerve in architecture.

The proceſſion of St. Sulpice's pariſh appeared one of the moſt ſplendid in Paris. This proceſſion was commenced by ſeveral perſons ſlowly walking after one another, and bearing church banners with the repreſentation of different ſaints and crucifixions. After them proceeded a long

a long rank of prieſts with white ſurplices and candles. Each perſon held in one hand a prayer book, and in the other a noſegay, with a large candle, to which was faſtened a piece of painted paſteboard in the form of a little ſhield.

Next appeared the little ſinging boys, or *enfans de choeur*, in white ſurplices; with their heads ſhaved, and covered on the ſummit with little round pieces of ſcarlet cloth. Next advanced a band of muſic, and then the clergy of St. Sulpice, two and two, covered with the richeſt and heavieſt velvet mantles of the moſt ſhewey colors, and ornamented over with thick and heavy fringes. Each prieſt had a candle and a prayer book in his hands. They ſang pſalms as they marched along, accompanied

companied by the muſic of ſerpents, which are a kind of inſtruments uſed in the churches here, the ſound of which reſembles the bellowing of bulls, and is uſed to ſwell the notes when a number of men raiſe their voices together.

The Swiſs grenadiers at each ſide, with their caps, whiſkers, and martial muſic, added not a little to the ſingularity of the affair.

In fine, the *dais*, or canopy, appeared, borne upon mens ſhoulders; ornamented with the richeſt fringes of gold, and with oſtriches feathers in large white plumes nodding over each corner above. Under the canopy walked three prieſts dreſſed in the moſt glittering robes. The prieſt who walked in the middle, bore with both his hands a large golden

golden ſun, adorned in the moſt ſumptuous manner with jewels and precious ſtones. At the center of the golden ſun was the hoſt, and the rays of gold diverged from it all round like a crown of glory.

The canopy was ſurrounded by forty or fifty young prieſts, neatly dreſſed in long white robes, with broad ſaſhes of red and blue ribbon round the waiſt, and hanging down at the ſide. The one half of theſe perſons bore baſkets full of roſe leaves, and the reſt bore ſilver cenſers and chains.

As the *dais* advanced, the populace, bare headed, fell upon their knees at every ſide, ſometimes crying out in their own dialect, *le voila! voila le bon Dieu! o ce bieau, ce bieau!*

As

As the proceſſion advanced, the people ſtrewed the ground with green leaves and graſs; which with the ſprightly colors of the tapeſtry on each ſide of the ſtreet, the church banners and golden croſſes and canopy borne aloft, the prieſts with their golden robes, the Swiſs grenadiers at each ſide, the ſinging, drums, and bands of muſic, the ſolemn march of the whole, the multitude around on their knees and bowing their heads in the moſt awful manner, with the ſolemn din of the bells in all the ſteeples of Paris, altogether made this the moſt ſingular ſpectacle I have ever ſeen.

Each time the proceſſion came to one of the altars or *repoſoirs* erected in the moſt open and public places, the whole made a ſolemn halt. The prieſts formed a large circle ſurrounded by the military, on

on the outſide of whom the populace preſſed againſt one another. After a great deal of ceremony, and a general ſalute from the bands of muſic, one of the prieſts ſolemnly bore the golden ſun from the canopy, and aſcending the ſteps, placed it upon the altar, and proſtrated himſelf upon his knees. After much ceremony he again took in his hands the golden ſun, and turning towards the people, ſolemnly lifted it up three times; during which the ſoldiers, the prieſts, the populace, all fell on their knees, and religiouſly bowed down their heads. On this, the muſic began a general ſalute; and the prieſts in white, who bore the baſkets of roſe leaves, and the others who bore the ſilver cenſers, on a ſignal given bowed down their heads together; and at another ſignal threw up a profuſion of roſe leaves in the

the air, and alſo caſt up the cenſers. The red roſe leaves, and the glittering ſilver cenſers, all repeatedly riſing together with the greateſt regularity, appeared uncommonly pretty and brilliant.

The proceſſion near the Porte St. Denis was ſimilar to that of St. Sulpice; but much more remarkable in one particular: It was preceded by a number of half naked children in ranks, in the midſt of whom was a child covered with goats ſkins, to repreſent St. John the Baptiſt; with a lamb to repreſent our Saviour, and a young woman in white to perſonate the Virgin Mary; followed by a child with a crown on his head, to ſignify St. Lewis; and ſeveral other children in various dreſſes to repreſent different

ferent ſaints and martyrs, and other children, dreſſed like little capuchins, cordeliers, cenobites, carthuſians, &c. This kind of parade muſt be very impoſing on the vulgar, in all countries compoſed of the moſt illiterate and ſuperſtitious of the people; yet it by no means has the ſame effect which it had two or three centuries ago.

Though theſe proceſſions may appear whimſical and abſurd to a ſtranger; yet I am not ſo inhuman as to revile and ridicule this method of worſhip, becauſe it differs from that uſed in my own country. I think, on the contrary, that as theſe people are thoroughly convinced that it is the real body of Chriſt which they carry in proceſſion, they are in the right to pay to it every honor and adoration;

ration: For if the body of a compaſſionate God, who ſuffered the moſt cruel agony and death to ſave us from eternal miſery, was given to us as a pledge of his love, what reſpect, what tributes of eſteem could we pay, capable of expreſſing the gratitude we ought to feel, and worthy of ſo adorable a gift? They may be deceived; and ſo may we: human nature is liable to error: But I ſhall never cenſure religious inſtitutions of the kind; for thoſe who practiſe them, do them from a motive of love and gratitude to the Divine Being, and to pay homage to the God whom we all adore.

The annual proceſſion of the Fauxbourg St. Laurence, is made in commemoration of a miracle ſaid to have been wrought

wrought in 1718. In that proceſſion the gigantic effigy of a ſoldier is triumphantly carried about, and burned at the concluſion of the ceremony. The occaſion of this is deſcribed by an hiſtorical painting in the church of St. Martin des champs. As it is a curious piece of antiquity, and will ſhew you what barbarity, ſuperſtition, and nonſenſe, overwhelmed the world a few centuries ago, I ſhall here ſend it you, as I have tranſcribed it on the ſpot.

" L'an mil quatre cens dix-huit, le troiſieme du Juillet, veille de la tranſlation de St. Martin, un malheureux Soldat déſeſperé d'avoir perdu tout ſon argent et ſes habits à jouer dans une taverne, ſortant d'icelle après avoir proferé une infinité de jurements, et vomy quantité de blaſphemes contre l'image de la Vierge Marie,

Marie, qui eſtoit lors en la rue aux ours, il la frappa proditoirement d'un coup de Couſteau, et à l'inſtant la dicte image rendit du ſang en abondance. La juſtice en eſtant advertie, il fuſt mené pardevant Monſieur de Merle, Chancellier de France, & par Arreſt de la Court de Parlement fuſt conduict devant la dicte image, et la, eſtant lié à un poteau il fuſt frappé d'eſcourgees avec une telle vehemence que les entrailles luy ſortoient, et par après euſt la langue percé d'un fer chaud. Du depuis il fuſt brulé et reduit en cendres, et les ſouvelles ont eſté ſemé au vent pour ſervir d'exemple aux pervers de ne commettre ſemblables ſacrileges.

Ce tableau a eſté donné par Pierre Hualt, Pierre Belleville, et Claude Lou-

ſon, et Fleury Bavart, en l'année 1636, tous Meſſrs. et gouverneurs de ceſte confrairie."

" In the year one thouſand four hun-
" dred and eighteen, the third of July,
" the eve of the tranſlation of St. Mar-
" tin, a wretched Soldier, in deſpair
" for having loſt all his money and his
" cloaths at gaming in a tavern, on going
" out, after having uttered an infinity
" of oaths, and vomited a quantity of
" blaſphemies againſt the image of the
" Virgin Mary, which was then in the
" rue aux ours, traiterouſly gave her a
" ſtab of a knife, when at the very
" ſame inſtant the image ſpouted out
" blood in abundance. The Police be-
" ing informed of it, he was brought
" before Monſ. de Merle, Chancellor of
" France, and by Arret of the Court of
" Parliament

"Parliament was conducted before the "ſaid image, and there being tied to a "poſt, was ſcourged with rods, with "ſuch violence, that his inteſtines came "out, after which his tongue was bored "with a red-hot iron. He was then "burned and reduced to a coal, and "his aſhes were ſcattered in the winds, "to ſerve as an example to wicked "people not to commit ſimilar ſacri-"leges. This picture was given by "Peter Hualt, Peter Belleville, Claude "Louſon, and Fleury Bavart, in the "year 1636; all of them gentlemen and "governors of this friary."

It is truly aſtoniſhing that this picture and inſcription ſhould as yet be ſuffered to remain in a chriſtian church, and that an annual proceſſion ſhould be main-

tained in honor of the bleeding image of the rue aux ours and the murder of a miſerable ſoldier! When we read of the cuſtoms of the ancient Druids, who ſacrificed men and children to their idols, we are ſtricken with horror, and are aſtoniſhed that men ever could be ſuch barbarous creatures. Yet the Druids were in ſome manner excuſable; for they never were accuſtomed from their tendereſt infancy to any thing but war and a ſavage people, and ſtill more ſavage religion; and ſuppoſing their Gods fierce and blood-thirſty like themſelves, thought there was no way more effectual to appeaſe their wrath than to make a voluntary ſacrifice of whatever they held moſt dear and beloved, even their tender infants; and when their Gods were propitious, they thought the moſt acceptable ſacrifice they could make,

make, would be their enemies reeking in warm blood at the foot of the altar. I cannot ſo much blame the invincible ignorance of the Druids; but a people, who boaſt themſelves enlightened by revealed Religion, are in no wiſe excuſable, but deſerve our abhorrence, who through wanton cruelty, put to an excruciating death an unhappy man, one of their own ſpecies, as if a pleaſing ſacrifice to the God of mercy and compaſſion! I do not write this to bring an odium on the church of Rome; far from it; for that religion teaches humanity and love to God and man; as well as all other modifications of the Chriſtian faith: but I am an enemy to cruelty, and abſurd perſecution of any kind, and in all places; and I do not think there can be a more

excellent virtue in man, than to feel for the miſeries of others, and not to exerciſe too cruelly over his fellow mortals, whatever authority merit or chance has veſted in his hands.

LETTER

LETTER XVII.

Paris, 23d June.

TACITUS ſays of the ancient Engliſh, Injurias ægré tolerant, jam domiti ut pareant, nondum ut ſerviant; and to this day the Engliſh have a natural ſtubborn ſpirit, which will not ſuffer them to brook ſlavery, or even the ſhadow of it; a ſpirit, which though productive of the moſt admirable conſtitution, and enviable power and empire, is yet attended with frequent anarchy and uproar: this gave Voltaire reaſon to ſay in his Henriade,

l'Anglais indompté,
Qui ne peut ni ſervir, ni vivre en liberté.

Thus alſo the French retain much of the ſame temper and nature of the ancient Gauls; and the character given by Cæſar of the old inhabitants of this part of Europe, will in many reſpects ſuit them even in the preſent age. The ſame alacrity, vivacity, and inſtability are as yet their national character. Yet, in other reſpects, they are very different from their forefathers; for a long continuance of luxury has made them more effeminate than their neighbours the Swiſs and Germans; and they have ſcarce one ſpark of the fire of liberty ſtill latent in their breaſts. According as luxury, with the arts and ſciences, advanced in France, the people were continually loſing more and more of their liberty, until they at length have degenerated into ſlaves. In England it has

has been quite the reverſe; according as arts, ſciences, and refinement advanced, the crown gradually has diminiſhed in power and authority, until our government arrived to the moſt admirable ſtandard, to a juſt equilibrium, where the conſtituent parts, like the ſtones of an arch, give permanence and ſtrength to the ſtructure, by mutually preſſing on one another; and the ſovereign ſeems like the key-ſtone which occupies the higheſt place and finiſhes the whole, though in reality in itſelf only a conſtituent part.

Ambiorix ſaid to Cæſar, "the people "have not leſs authority over me than I "over the people." Which ſhews, that the authority of the ſovereigns of the ancient Gauls, was under proper re-

ſtraint, and that the body of the people had a knowledge of their own power and majeſty.

I was this morning amuſing myſelf with a little pamphlet entitled *Mouſtaches*; in which the author, after giving a hiſtory of the faſhion of wearing beards and whiſkers, which ſeemed gradually to dwindle away as the authority of the French kings encreaſed; not daring to expreſs himſelf more openly, concludes with ſaying, *Ah Francais, en perdant vos mouſtaches, vous avez tous perdu!*

It is aſtoniſhing that there are whole nations of civilized men in the world, ſo loſt to every ſenſe of their proper intereſt, birth-right, and importance, as

to

to ſubmit to the deſpotic will of a man ſeldom better than one of themſelves. If it is reaſonable to admire men of ſenſe and virtue, and equally reaſonable to diſreſpect men in whoſe actions there appears no mark of any thing good and ſenſible, we certainly ſhould from principle deſpiſe the men who have no regard to their liberty and ſubmit to the deſpotic mandates of another. Cicero ſpoke like a true patriot and philoſopher when he ſaid,

> Nihil eſt fœdius ſervitute. Ad decus et Libertatem nati ſumus.

Such baſe ſubmiſſion is not founded upon nature, nor upon reaſon, nor upon common ſenſe, neither is it upon good policy; for the inhabitants of free ſtates

ſtates are always more induſtrious, and, of courſe, more affluent than the ſubjects of an abſolute government.

The French, not content with ſubmitting to a race of monarchs, who imagine they were born to command their fellow creatures, and have by crafty miniſters deprived the people of their rights and liberty, abſolutely adore them; think it an honour to fight and die in their ſervice, and glory in the character given them by other nations, of being attached to their ſovereigns even to folly and romance. Without doubt, there is ſomething in loyalty, that I know not why, ſeems amiable, heroic, and even romantic; it appears noble and generous to riſk our all in another's cauſe, to expoſe our lives for a chief,

a chief, whoſe anceſtors were obeyed and honoured by ours: Yet, is this reaſon? is this juſtice? I would admire the French for their attachment to their ſovereign, if the Bourbons were all ſuch men as Peter the great, or the late king of Pruſſia; but it is far from being ſo; and were Lewis XV. and others who make ſuch a figure in the annals of France, born in private ſituations of life, they in all probability would never have elevated themſelves above their equals in fortune, by virtue and heroiſm. If we reflect for a moment, we muſt think this boaſted ardor truly abſurd and ridiculous. To fight for our parents, our property, our country, or our friends, is heroic, natural and admirable; but like an inhuman butcher to go to battle for

the

the glory of a man who I do not know; who if I receive a muſket ball, and die in torment, will not ſhed a tear for my unhappy fate; who would rather loſe a man than a horſe in battle, becauſe a horſe coſts more; is vile, deteſtable, and ignoble, unworthy of that native pride with which nature has dignified the noble creature man. A very hangman, who in England is conſidered as the moſt infamous and accurſed of mankind, in truth and reaſon may be ſaid to have a leſs hateful and inhuman employment than a Frenchman who goes to fight merely for his king. The hangman only puts to death the wretches who are condemned as unworthy to live, and are ſentenced by the laws of their country to be cut off from ſociety; but the loyal ſoldier,

for

for a trifling ſtipend, goes to cut the throats of men, probably, as worthy to live as himſelf, and all for the glory of a man whom perhaps he neither knows, nor has ever ſeen.

LETTER

LETTER XVIII.

Paris, 25th June.

BEFORE the Chriſtian æra France, England, and Ireland, were equally barbarous, and reſembled one another in language, manners and cuſtoms, ſome remains of which can be traced at this day. The religion was the ſame, or nearly ſo: Cæſar ſays, *Diſciplina Druidum in Britanniâ reperta, atque Galliam indè tranſlatâ; & nunc qui diligentius eam rem cognoſcere volunt, plerùmque illò diſcendi cauſa proficiſcuntur.* The ruins of the Druidical temples are as yet to to be ſeen both in England, Ireland, and France. There is a celebrated one upon the plain of Saliſbury, and we have many ſimilar ones in Ireland; and the

the remains of one are to be ſeen at Ponts-ſur-Seine in France. Inigo Jones was the greateſt of the few architects England ever produced: He wrote a volume in folio, publiſhed at London in 1655, to prove that the enormous rocks of Stone-hedge on Saliſbury plain, were the ruins of a Roman temple dedicated to Cælius. I am aſtoniſhed that a man of his taſte could write ſuch abſurdities. When he was at Rome he certainly never ſaw ſuch ruins of temples: and we have many of the ſame kind in Ireland, although the Romans never came amongſt us.

Even many of the religious cuſtoms of our barbarous forefathers are ſtill retained in England, Ireland, France, and other European countries. The Druids uſed to make fires on ſtated times

in

in honor of the gods who they imagined to preſide over the ſeaſons. In many parts of England they ſtill retain this antique ceremony, and burn a huge piece of timber with more or leſs ceremony, which they call the burning of the *yule clog*. The Saxons began their year on the eighth of the calends of January, which is our Chriſtmas day, and the time on which the yule clog is burned in England. Some years ago in Ireland we uſed to make bonfires on four ſtated days in the year; but at preſent we only retain the cuſtom of making fires on Midſummer's day. Although I do not know, if we at preſent in any place make bonfires on May day; yet it appears to me more than probable, that the cuſtom of planting may-buſhes, may-poles, and other ceremonies on that day, are ſome remains of a Druidical ſacrifice. May-day, in Iriſh,

is

is called *Lab' Baal tinib*; that is to ſay, the day of Baal's fire. This Baal was one of their Gods; but whether the ſame with the eaſtern Baal or not, I ſhall not pretend to determine. In France, as well as in Ireland, they make bonfires in many places on Midſummer's day or St. John's eve. I had the curioſity to go yeſterday to ſee this ceremony at the place de Greve.

In the middle of the ſquare was placed a pyramid of buſhes and fagots, in the midſt of which was planted a tall tree, whoſe boughs overtopped the heap of buſhes, &c. The *Prévot des Marchands* and the *Echevins* marched in proceſſion out of the town-houſe, dreſſed in their robes, which are of a moſt ſingular faſhion. I know not how to give you any idea of it; except by bidding you

ſuppoſe

ſuppoſe about twenty men dreſſed in long ſcarlet robes, and about twenty more dreſſed in blue robes; then, in your imagination, with a hatchet ſlit every one of them right through the head, cheſt, &c. and then glew together the half of every red robed gentleman with the correſponding half of every blue; and you can conceive an idea of the figure theſe magiſtrates cut in their party-coloured garments. After the echevins, &c. marched a number of ſervants carrying lighted torches in their hands. The proceſſion was preceded and followed by two or three companies of the city guards, with colours and bands of muſic. The populace were kept at a diſtance by centinels; while the proceſſion, in ſlow and ſolemn ceremony, moved three times all round the ſquare; after which

which the Echevins, &c. took from their ſervants the lighted torches, and ſet fire to the tree and faggots, which were conſumed amidſt the acclamations of the rabble.

I am told it was formerly the cuſtom here for every family to make a bonfire before their houſe on Midſummer's day; but at preſent they only make bonfires in two or three public places, and eſpecially in the place de Greve, which was formerly the moſt reſpectable part of the town. In ſeveral cities in France, where they have churches dedicated to St. John the baptiſt, they make a proceſſion to the church before they light the fire. The firſt chriſtian miſſionaries in theſe parts found it conducive to the propagation of the goſpel to retain

retain ſeveral of the Druidical cuſtoms, on purpoſe to make innovations and the true faith ſeem leſs objectionable and leſs oppoſite to the manners of the fierce and ignorant barbarians; and this is the reaſon why we find ſome of the old religious ceremonies of the Druids ſtill retained, and in many places confounded with the inſtitutions of the chriſtian churches. A gentleman of my acquaintance told me, that two or three years ago, upon a Midſummer's night, he was witneſs to a barbarous ceremony of the kind at Mont Revel in Breſſe. He had not long retired to bed, when he heard a confuſed noiſe of human voices; upon which he immediately got up, and went to his window; and beheld a multitude of the peaſants, covered over with cows horns, faſtened to every part of them. Many of them carried buſhes,

ſtuck

ſtuck all over with lighted candles, others carried bones and horns, which they continually ſtruck againſt each other, and all united in howling, and bellowing; producing a moſt hideous concert. One or two who appeared to be the ring leaders, repeated the litany of the Virgin in Latin. As they cried out *Mater angelorum*, &c. the reſt of the rabble roared out, not *ora pro nobis*, but *ora pro cornu*? This ſavage proceſſion has been often ſeverely reprimanded; but the peaſants could never be prevailed upon to forſake it; ſuch is the influence of old cuſtom over the minds of men.

The language at preſent ſpoken in the high-lands of Scotland, by the common people in Ireland, and in ſome parts of Wales, are evidently only varieties

rieties of the ſame; and the *patois*, or dialects, of the northern provinces in France, reſemble very much the Gaelic, and plainly appear to be derived from it. Even the politer language of France retains a great many words of the old Gaelic, as garçon, cruche, &c. &c. The pronunciation of the French reſembles more that of the Iriſh than of the Engliſh; eſpecially in the letters *a* and *i*. In other reſpects alſo the French is ſomewhat like the Iriſh; the words are polyſyllables in general; or at leaſt monoſyllables are not ſo frequent as in Engliſh, which makes our language, though preciſe, and energic, ſomewhat leſs ſmooth in the pronunciation. The French words flow with a luxuriance, and I may ſay fill the mouth; and have nothing of a certain crabbedneſs which I diſcern in the Engliſh. The French poſſeſſes all

the

the ſoftneſs of the Iriſh, without having that moſt diſagreeable guttural ſound ſo frequent in Iriſh, and which we have in England in the word *lough*, as commonly pronounced. It has been much in vogue to introduce French expreſſions into Engliſh diſcourſe, and I think with reaſon; for, as there are many words in French which have no correſponding words in our language to equal them in particular force of expreſſion, we enrich our native tongue by their introduction; yet too great a latitude ought not to be allowed in this cuſtom; and at the ſame time I do not know any good reaſon, why it ſhould be held ridiculous to borrow expreſſions from the Iriſh; which would be more agreeable to our idiom both in England and Ireland; and if any perſons ſhould ſay, that the

Iriſh is not a moſt ſonorous, copious, and expreſſive language, they ſhew they are unacquainted with it. For there are many terms in Iriſh which paint certain ideas to the mind, infinitely in more ſtriking colors, than perhaps half a dozen words in Engliſh on the ſame ſubject. The French language is a picture of the people that ſpeak it; it is ſoft, gay, equivocal, and admits a variety of *jeu de mots*: Yet in many reſpects is imperfect in expreſſion. For example, they are obliged to put two negatives together to have the force of a ſingle one in any other language; thus *je ne ſcai pas*, literally tranſlated into Engliſh, ſignifies, *I don't not know*; which is abſolute nonſenſe; or at leaſt has a contrary meaning to the French, one negative deſtroying the force of another.

The

The genders in names of things without life in the French language, in my opinion, are unneceſſary, and even ſo many faults; although the Greeks and Latins had them in their much admired languages. It is abſurd that breeches ſhould be of the feminine gender, and that a petticoat ſhould be of the maſculine; ma culotte, mon jupon. Beſides the name of a certain thing which above all others is moſt feminine, in the French language is maſculine. The genders of things without life are not only uſeleſs, but falſe, unnatural, and abſurd; and ſo irregular, and difficult to learn, that none of the French themſelves can determine the genders of every noun in their language. Beſides, they render the language ſometimes unintelligible; which

is the moſt capital fault a language can have. When the French ſay *ſa majeſté*, one cannot know whether they talk of the king, or of the queen. When they ſay *ſa tête*, one cannot diſtinguiſh whether it is meant the head of a man, of a woman, or of a ſtick. In Engliſh we would ſay to ſignify the head of a man, *his* head; for that of a woman, *her* head; and for that of a thing without life, *its* head; but how inexpreſſive would it not be, if we had only *her* head, to ſignify them all! *Je crain que vous ne tombiez*, means I am afraid you will fall; but literally tranſlated, would ſignify, I am afraid you will *not* fall. This, and a thouſand other expreſſions of the kind, in which the negative is improperly uſed, ſhew the imperfection of the language.

In

In the French, Engliſh, and many other European languages, when we ſpeak to a perſon, we addreſs him in the plural number. It is ſaid that this manner of ſpeaking ſhews more reverence and reſpect for the perſon to whom we ſpeak; yet, though it were ſo at the beginning, it cannot be ſo at preſent; for it has become ſo univerſal, that it is no longer eſteemed a compliment. I diſapprove of it very much; nor can I conceive why it ſhould be thought more reſpectful to addreſs a perſon as if he was a congregation of men, than himſelf alone. Is it becauſe certain kings and profeſſors ſtile themſelves *we?* Yet, if a king ſays *we*, it is rather a modeſt manner of expreſſing his proclamations; as if he ſpoke the words of his counſel, or of

the legiſlative body, and not of himſelf. The abſolute Turk ſtiles himſelf *I*, as being the individual primum mobile of the empire; conſequently, it ſhould appear more reſpectful to addreſs a man in the ſingular number, as if he was conſequential and excellent in himſelf, and not as if he drew his conſequence from a league with others. But above all, this method of expreſſion is contrary to the native ſimplicity of the Engliſh language; and ſo unnatural to us, that many Engliſh perſons ſay, *who is you?* and *you was*, &c. and look upon *you* as being the ſecond perſon ſingular, and expreſs the plural by *ye*. But this is abſurdity upon abſurdity; and plainly ſhews, that ſuch a falſe method of expreſſion is not at all adapted to our language, nor our nature, and that we involuntarily degenerate

generate into ſomething like truth and ſimplicity again. In reality, the people called quakers are the only perſons who ſpeak according to nature, to truth, to grammar, or to common ſenſe.

LETTER XIX.

Paris, 28th June.

I WAS yeſterday to ſee a French opera; yet was not ſo much entertained as I ſuppoſed I ſhould. Certainly my eyes and ears were charmed; but there was ſomething more that I ſought for in vain; ſomething to gratify the mind: for inſtead of ſeeing a fine ſubject, with noble ſentiment and expreſſion, adorned with all the perſuaſive power of vocal and inſtrumental harmony, I found the words and ſentiments confounded in an inexplicable, though harmonious noiſe, and glittering ſhew.

The dancing of the opera girls was more graceful, natural, and charming, than

than it is poſſible to expreſs by words: A very ſtoic could not behold without emotion!

The artificial tempeſts and ſnowing of fire, with volcanos, &c. were brilliant and aſtoniſhing, and hurried the imagination into all the fairy realms of romance. Every new ſcene and flaſh of fire was received by the audience with *bravo! magnifique! O ſuperbe!*

The muſic to me appeared too complex, and at times almoſt unintelligible. In ſome ſcenes of the opera embattled armies crowded the ſtage, and repeated in chorus a martial ſong, that impreſſed me with a kind of rapture; but when I ſaw them fight and ſing, and ſing and fight; a ſtroke to every word, and a ſet number of deaths to every bar of

muſic; I could not help laughing, and thinking it not a rational amuſement to entertain men of ſenſe, but a ſplendid play-thing for children.

The celebrated Jean Jaques Rouſſeau, endeavored to prove with a great deal of ſophiſtry, that there is no ſuch thing as a genus of muſic peculiar to France; and even that the French language is leſs capable than any other of being ſet to muſic, without doing violence to the accent and idiom, as well as to the laws of harmony. Voltaire ſeems to coincide with Rouſſeau in his opinion of the French muſic. The unfortunate philoſopher of Geneva made more enemies, by writing againſt French muſic, than by all his free thoughts on Religion; for by the latter, he only attacked their devotion; but by the former, he mortified their

their vanity. He had been complimented with a ſeat at the opera; but as ſoon as he had written his remarks on French muſic, he was expelled, vilified, and his effigy, together with his writings, were publicly burned. In a work which he wrote ſome time after, he proved that he had reaſon for what he had advanced, and that he was a moſt excellent judge of the ſubject.

Lady Montague, in her letters from Conſtantinople, takes particular notice of a muſic peculiar to that people. She very much excited my curioſity; but I was never able to gratify it in that reſpect. I regret, that the ancients had not a more intelligible manner of handing down to us their muſic; for it is probable, that the muſic of the ancient Greeks was very fine; becauſe they

ſpoke

ſpoke a language almoſt as ſoft as the modern Italian, and at the ſame time infinitely more copious, expreſſive, and majeſtically ſonorous and grand, and which their poets and orators modulated at will, into whatever cadence or harmony they pleaſed, obedient to the rules of different dialects. And, as we find, that the muſic of a people is characteriſtic of their language; as the language is of the genius and temper of thoſe who ſpeak it; it is more than probable that their muſic was excellent and delightful. I do not pretend to ſay that they were ſuperior to the moderns in harmony; for muſic was not then made a regular profeſſion as at preſent; beſide, that they had a very imperfect method of noting; and their muſical inſtruments were not at all equal to our violins; yet, they had, as well as

we,

we, the ſweeteſt of all inſtruments, the human voice; and I think it very probable, that they excelled the modern Italians in all the natural charms of ſimple melody.

If Rouſſeau had been acquainted with the old Iriſh muſic, he certainly would have given it the encomium it deſerved. He ſomewhere mentions the airs and tunes of Scotland; but the old Scotch muſic does not at all differ from the Iriſh; and old "true the wood loddy," "Roſlin Caſtle," "the Birks of Ender-"may," &c. are compoſed in the ſame ſtile of the plaintive muſic of Ireland; from which the Scotch deduce the pathetic ſweetneſs of the airs, wherever they have gotten the modern ſprightlineſs.

There

There is ſomething delightfully plaintive and pathetic in ſome of the pieces of Carualach, or, as we vulgarly ſpell it, Carolan, that goes to the heart, and is infinitely ſuperior to all the flouriſhing of Italian muſic. It is ſomething romantic, wild; a melancholy, heart-felt joy, that is almoſt ſupernatural; an idea of which no pen can write. In M'Pherſon's Oſſian, the author ſeems to have felt this inimitable pathos of the old Iriſh muſic, when he ſays, *The muſic of Carryl was, like the memory of joys that are paſſed, pleaſant and mournful to the ſoul.*

I am convinced, that many of our plaintive pieces, ſuch as *Shean O Duir an glanna*, and others of the admirable Carualach's compoſition, would have a greater effect upon an Iriſh ear, and inſpire

ſpire us with a more auguſt and ſolemn ſenſation of religion from the organ loft, than the fineſt flouriſhing and quirking *te Deum* that ever Italy produced. In reality, the greater number of us admire the Italian muſic, becauſe it is the faſhion, rather than that we are really ſo much delighted with it. I wiſh we would pay ſomewhat more attention to our native muſic: it is natural to us, and ſuitable to our diſpoſition and temper. There ſeems to be no medium; it is either delightfully pathetic and plaintive, or exceſſively lively and merry. The few ſpecimens known in England, *Maile a ſtoir*, *Eilin a ruin*, *Molambnie's* jigg, and a few others, are univerſally admired, and even regarded as being almoſt inimitable. A celebrated muſician, on hearing the old

Iriſh

Iriſh air of "my lodging is on the "cold ground," exclaimed, that it would be counted the fineſt piece of muſic in the world, if compoſed by an Italian.

LETTER

LETTER XX.

Paris, 30th June.

ON the Engliſh ſtage we are of opinion, that there is ſomething in the conſtant chiming of rhyme too fantaſtical and even frivolous for the grave and ſolemn ſtile of tragedy. But on the French ſtage, the beſt pieces of Corneille, Racine, Crebillon, and Voltaire, are compoſed in rhyme. This the genius of the French language ſeems to require; for, as it does not poſſeſs that variety of metrical modulation, which produces the poetical muſic of our blank verſe, without rhyme they would ſcarce have any thing like poetry at all. This is a very great reſtraint on dramatic genius in France; eſpecially as

as it is ſo difficult to make rhyme in the French language: for if a line ends with a word of the feminine gender, the next line muſt alſo terminate with a feminine word, for a maſculine would be counted falſe rhyme. Beſides, it is not poſſible to abbreviate and contract the words, and even run them into one another as we can frequently in Engliſh.

Nothing appears to me more abſurd and contrary to reaſon, than that when a hero concludes his ſpeech in a tragedy, he ſhould be inſtantly anſwered in a line rhyming with the laſt he ſpoke. Perhaps it was to avoid this as much as poſſible, that the French put ſuch enormous ſpeeches in the mouths of their tragic perſonages.

I doubt

I doubt very much, if even in the French language, the rhyme is abſolutely neceſſary in operas and ſongs; for the time and modulations of the muſic, ſo change the accent and meaſure of the words and lines, that the effect of the rhyme is ſeldom or never perceived.

Though the French dramatic authors are obliged to ſubmit to ſo difficult and mechanical a method of compoſition, often at the expence of expreſſion and ſentiment, there are ſome pieces of Racine, Voltaire, and others, where flow the moſt harmonious lines, that at the ſame time poſſeſs all the cadence and dignity of blank verſe, together with the flowery ornament of rhyme. Yet I think we were in the right to baniſh from our ſtage the rhyme; for though it may ſuit the language and fancies of

ſo

ſo gay a people as the French, an audience of more gravely diſpoſed inhabitants of Britain, would find it intolerable to hear a Lear and an Othello, chanting out their woes in rhyme. The firſt and greateſt poet in the world, the admirable Homer, with the other Greek and Latin poets and dramatic authors, held rhyme in diſdain, and depended entirely on the manly harmony of ſpondees and dactyls.

LETTER

LETTER XXI.

Paris, 1ſt July.

THE French aſſume a ſuperiority to the Engliſh ſtage in tragedy. They ſay, that our tragedies, inſtead of terror, are full of horror; and that our ſtage is ever adorned with daggers and poiſonous bowls; that the laws of the drama are ſeldom obſerved; and that Shakeſpeare, as Monſieur de Voltaire was pleaſed to call him, is an abſolute barbarian. The turbulent and ſavage ſpirit of the Engliſh, ſay they, makes ſuch tragedies alone acceptable; and they have no taſte for the correct plots and ſtudied incidents of French tragedy.

Without

Without doubt, many of our ancient tragedies are full of cruelty and blood; but even this cruelty ſtrikes home; it is a natural and ſimple coloring, and without a tincture of it, we could not draw to the life the warlike Greeks and Romans, nor the romantic valor of the Gothic age, which are the portraits that chiefly adorn the tragic ſcene.

It is alſo true, that Shakeſpeare ſeldom fettered his genius with the laws of the drama; and in many of his moſt admired pieces commits anachroniſms, and regards neither time or place: Yet from this natural, this almoſt illiterate genius, the moſt ſublime ideas that ever could dignify the mind of man, and elevate

us above our own nature to the ſtate of angels, or what other orders of æthereal beings are above us, have been produced.

LETTER

LETTER XXII.

Paris, 2d July.

THE tragedy of the Cid appears to my taſte, to be the maſterpiece of Corneille; though there are many who equally admire his tragedy of Cinna; at any rate it muſt be regarded as a ſpecimen of the beſt tragedies on the French ſtage. The Cid diſplays to the imagination a picture drawn with all the ſtrength of coloring, in which are repreſented the moſt violent incidents and paſſions, and the encountering ſhock of filial duty, hatred, love, and revenge, which engage our whole ſouls in the moſt intereſting fear, ſorrow, and ſurpriſe. According to the laws obſerved on the French ſtage, according

to

to the unities of Ariſtotle, Corneille was obliged to make all thoſe incidents happen in the ſpace of twenty-four hours; and was even under the neceſſity of making the virtuous heroine of the piece, Chimene, give her conſent to marry Roderigo, on the very day in which he killed her aged father in a duel; which is almoſt incredible. Thus the rules of the drama, beſides being an eternal fetter to a genius, ſometimes occaſion what they were intended to prevent; that is, improbability: for though it may ſeem more agreeable to truth, to repreſent the proceedings of one day only, in a play which is recited in two or three hours; yet it is not at all agreeable to probability, to repreſent a number of incidents as happening in one day, when in the courſe of things

they could not have happened in leſs than ſeveral months or years.

In the tragedies of Racine we diſcover all the ſoftneſs and refinement we ſhould expect from a more modern poet: but in general there is a certain languidneſs in his tragedies, eſpecially in *les Freres Ennemis*, that makes them ſeem ſomewhat monotonous to an ear accuſtomed to Shakeſpeare. This is increaſed by the length of the ſpeeches; for the French think it beneath the dignity of tragedy, that the heroes ſhould deſcend to ſuch natural diſcourſe as we find in Hamlet, Romeo and Juliet, &c. This is carried to ſuch an exceſs, that the perſons appear rather to declaim in formal harangues, than diſcourſe as men naturally would. In ſome of the tragedies of Corneille, the ſpeeches are

in

in general from fifty to ninety or an hundred lines each.

The tragedy of Athalie is the moſt admired of Racine; the verſification is poliſhed and correct; the ſtile eaſy and free; and the dream of the queen is finely imagined and intereſting; yet the piece may be ſaid to be rather calm. Athalie appears to have very much reaſon to perſecute the Jews; and a ſpectator does not find himſelf ſo intereſted and engaged as with the more admired pieces of Shakeſpeare.

The moſt celebrated paſſage in this moſt eſteemed tragedy of Racine is the anſwer of the high-prieſt, Ioad, when his friend Abner came to inform him that Athalie, the queen, had vowed revenge on him, and all the tribes of

Iſrael. Conſcious of Divine protection, of his uprightneſs and ſacred office, he is not at all moved with fear, but with ſolemn and awful majeſty replies:

Celui qui met un frein à la fureur des flots,
Scait auſi des méchants arreter les complots:
Soumis avec reſpect à ſa volonté ſainte,
ge crain Dieu, cher Abner, et n'ai point d'autre crainte.

The God who curbs the fury of the main,
Can the weak efforts of the bad reſtrain:
With reverence and awe that God I own,
Reſpect and fear; but fear my God alone.

This is really very fine, and nothing could appear more becoming of a High-prieſt than ſuch a diſdain for mortal arms, and confidence in the power of Jehovah. Perhaps Shakeſpeare would have made the High-prieſt of the warlike Iſraelites more fierce, more ſuitable

to

to the barbarous age in which he lived; when the Levites ſometimes appeared covered with armor in the ranks of battle; and when reſignation to Divine providence was leſs conſpicuous, than in the new law, and the meeker precepts of chriſtianity; perhaps he would have made him ſay:

The Lord of hoſts,
Who rules the whirlwind and directs the ſtorm,
Can blaſt the treachery of a weak, vain woman:
God I adore and fear: but my ſoul ſcorns
To fear a mortal.

It is true, that the French pieces are what is called correct, and obedient to the laws preſcribed to the theatre by Ariſtotle; and never offend the moſt delicate ear with that mixture of low life and buffoonery ſo remarkable in ſome of the beſt tragedies of Shakeſpeare.

In reality many of his pieces are a very chaos of all that is excellent and abſurd; we find the juſteſt criticiſm, the ſevereſt ſatyr, and ſometimes the moſt ſublime ideas, mixed with the incoherent jargon of his mad men; like lightening in a dark and ſtormy ſky.

I may compare the productions of the Divine Shakeſpeare to a natural and fertile wild, where the ſpreading oak, the lofty pine, the violet, bramble, and the roſe, ſhoot on hill and dale in the utmoſt luxuriance of vegetation and liberty of nature. In compariſon, the French dramatic pieces reſemble a garden in the old French taſte, regulated into parallel walks, with beds of flowers, and pretty little rows of box, and trees clipped into the form of obeliſks and pyramids.

LETTER XXIII.

Paris, 4th July.

MANY of the French authors are extremely entertaining: That vivacity, gallantry, mirth, and ſprightlineſs ſo univerſal in the converſation of the French, is wonderfully refined in their poets and authors in general. And Voltaire, above all others, glows with a luxuriant variety of every thing the livelieſt wit and ſatyr can afford for amuſement and delight. He is a very miracle of genius; yet abounds ſo much in *eſprit*, and his wit is ſo various, and of ſuch an amazing volatility, that it was impoſſible he could have been produced any where but in France. He has been of ſome ſervice to mankind,

and yet has been of infinite harm alſo. He ſeems to have diveſted himſelf of every principle, not only of religion, but of human nature; and if there are any things in this world, which ſhould be held in abhorrence and abomination by men, they are the principles, or rather the total deprivation of all principles, the poiſon of Voltaire. Muſt not a man, even a Deiſt, conſider that the ſame nature which makes the tulips to blow in ſplendid colors; which teaches the tigers to live in peace with one another; and the ſhe-bears to love and protect their young; teaches man alſo to love virtue, and feel an abhorrence for every thing baſe and vile: And yet, though he reaſoned himſelf out of every principle of religion and nature, and endeavored to confound vice and virtue together, he ſtill retained, unknown

to

to himſelf, the natural abhorrence for injuſtice and vice; and in ſome of his works inſpires us with ſuch hatred againſt cruelty and ſin; and deſcribed with ſuch ſweetneſs and pathetic truth, the charms of good-nature, virtue, and humanity, the luxury of doing good, that I have often laid down his book, and exclaimed,

Peut on ſi bien peindre la Vertu ſans l'aimer!

I muſt own, that I have looked into ſeveral French authors, which offer nothing either deſcriptive or ſentimental; and relate only ordinary ſubjects, with ſuch trifling vanity, ſuch extravagant circumlocution, that after having had the patience to read through a dozen pages, you acquire nothing by

your pains, and the author, after exciting your curioſity by pompous expreſſions, and a brilliant ſuperficies, forſakes you, without in any wiſe gratifying your expectations.

Parler beaucoup et ne rien dire
L'ennuyeuſe fécondité.

There is in many of them a ſuperfluity of trifles and even *riaiſeries*, that is truly diſgraceful to the nation. Lord Roſcommon had ſome reaſon to ſay,

Yet who did ever in French authors ſee
The comprehenſive Engliſh energy?
The weighty bullion of one ſterling line
Drawn in French wire, would through whole pages ſhine.

The French themſelves confeſs, that either from the difference of education, climate,

climate, or government, there is a vigor and depth in the writings of Engliſh authors, that, at beſt, is very rare in France. La Fontaine expreſſes this idea of our authors when he ſays, les Anglais penſent *profondement*.

France ſwarms with the kind of beings which Pope calls witlings; who exerciſe their abilities in out doing one another, in bouts-rimés, rebuſes, conundrums, logogriphs, charades, &c. &c.

Ut magnum, verſus dictabat, ſtans pede in uno.

The Gazettes and other periodical publications are crowded with writings of this nature; and very often I ſee the names of people of faſhion, of generals,

nerals, of magiſtrates, and prieſts, ſigned to moſt pitiful productions of the kind in the public papers. In one ſpecies of theſe compoſitions it muſt not extend to more than three lines, be a wretched play upon words, and each line terminate with one of the words mon *premier*, mon *dernier*, mon *entier*! Had monkeys the uſe of ſpeech, they could not contrive an amuſement more pitiful or more abſurd.

LETTER

LETTER XXIV.

Paris, 8th July.

I HAVE been amuſing myſelf at the quarries of Mont-Martre, which produce the celebrated ſtucco or plaſter of Paris. The quarries are very extenſive, and beautifully variegated all round with different colored ſtrata, which appear at a diſtance like a ſtriped ribbon or luteſtring.

The ſtone of which the plaſter is made, is of a whitiſh color, and not very hard. As ſoon as quarried, it is ranged in regular piles, and burned, after the manner bricks are burned in ſome parts of Ireland. When properly burned, it is of an extreme whiteneſs; but

but for uſe, is generally tempered with glue, and earth or ſand, according to the fancy of the workmen, or the uſe for which they intend it. The plaſter of Paris is a moſt beautiful and permanent ſtucco, if kept where it is not attackable by humidity. It is deſervedly eſteemed, and indeed no elegant building can be finiſhed without it. This ſtucco does not reſiſt humidity; for it is ſoluble in water, and falls away in ſleaks when expoſed to the action of water. Chemically analyzed, it is found to be a *ſelenite* with an exceſs of baſe; that is, a ſalt compoſed of calcareous earth, and ſulphuric or vitriolic acid. I think we very eaſily might compoſe a ſtucco of the ſame nature in Ireland, by adding what we call oil of vitriol to lime or chalk. In theſe quarries is likewiſe found another kind of ſelenite,

beautifully

beautifully tranſparent, and of a pliable toughneſs ſomewhat, like horn, and in form like the head of a javelin or arrow. A piece of this tranſparent matter expoſed to the fire, becomes opaque, and ſplits into an infinity of delicate and ſnowy flakes. Likewiſe, if a piece of it be taken in its natural ſtate, with a knife it may be divided in a certain direction, into millions of tranſparent laminæ. The chemiſts would probably attempt to account for this, by ſaying, it was occaſioned by the cryſtallization peculiar to the ſalt; but for my part, I ſuppoſe it to be the organization of a *vegetative ſtone*. This idea I know is very different from the ſyſtems and opinions of the moſt celebrated naturaliſts; yet though I muſt allow the theory of primary and ſecondary mountains to be very ingenious and

plauſible,

plauſible, I cannot reject plain and ſimple facts, and things which are evident to my ſenſes. In the South of Ireland I have frequently perceived ſemi-ſpherical maſſes of a hard blue lime-ſtone in the fields. On turning up the baſe, I have as often obſerved a profuſion of ſerpentine *roots*, covering the whole ſurface on that part of the ſtone; each root, though ſerpentine, reſembling the barrel part of a gooſe quill, having the rind of a white and hard ſtone, and the internal part of a more pulpy or earthy ſubſtance. On breaking the ſtone in a perpendicular direction, I could plainly trace the progreſs of the vegetation; that part of each root which penetrated the ſtone being white, but fading away into the blue color of the ſtone as it advanced. On breaking the ſtone in a horizontal direction, and near the baſe,

I could

I could perceive ſeveral circular whitiſh ſpots, being the channels through which nouriſhment was conveyed from the external roots of the body to the ſtone. Theſe blue lime-ſtones are conſiderably quick in growth, and a great variety of them are frequently found in the fields which were not in exiſtence a few months before. I think a man muſt contradict the evidence of his ſenſes, to ſay that corals are not vegetables, when he ſees them branching out like the bows of a tree, furniſhed with veſſels to convey nouriſhment to every part, covered with a bark, and adhering to a rock by a fibrous root. Yet it is more ingenious to ſuppoſe them the work of little inſects, who curiouſly build theſe habitations of coral with a ſymmetry and ſtrength that is a ſhame to our architects. Even in a

piece

piece of common ſlate we can diſcern the organs of vegetation, and the veſſels branching out in a profuſion of ramifications, like the arteries in the human body. If any one ſhould think that ſtones are too denſe and hard to vegetate, we muſt own that there are ſeveral kinds of wood as hard as certain ſorts of ſtone; and nobody will diſpute the vegetability of trees. Ivory is of a conſiderable denſity; and yet it grows, or I may ſay vegetates from the ſnout of the elephant. The ſhells grow or vegetate upon oiſters, and are of the ſame nature with lime-ſtone, and equally denſe and hard. The force of attraction or affinity of lime for fixed-air, or more properly ſpeaking carbonic acid, or even for vitriolic acid, does not equal the force of attraction between the alkalies and acids; and in my opi-

nion

nion is too inconſiderable to produce by cryſtallization the enormous rocks of the quarry. Yet perhaps cryſtallization is the firſt degree of vegetable life.

Allowing that ſtones are vegetables, we can account for the formation of calculi in the human body, and for many things, which we could not, were we to ſuppoſe them the reſult of cryſtallization, or the precipitation from water and gradual agglutination of material particles. Some naturaliſts finding it difficult to account by any of their theories, for the amazing regularity and ſymmetry of the Giants' cauſeway, ſuppoſed theſe ſtupendous columns to be the work of art; although the ſtone is ſo intenſely hard, as to reſiſt the edge of a chiſel. As I think that ſtones are

vegetables,

vegetables, I ſee nothing more wonderful, in the exactneſs with which the concave and convex ſurfaces of the baſaltes are adapted to one another, than in the regular joints of a bamboo or wonny: And it appears to me far more wonderful, how by vegetation can be produced the brilliancy of color, beauty, and perfume of a pink or violet.

The tea tree is a native of China, the ſugar cane grows to moſt perfection in the Weſt-India iſlands, the cedar is moſt eſteemed which grows on mount Libanus in Paleſtine, and the oak comes to great perfection in Ireland. Thus it is evident, that all vegetables do not thrive equally well in every climate or ſoil. And it is the ſame in reſpect to ſtones: The moſt radiant jewels are generally found in the warmer climes;

and

and the moſt beautiful marbles are alſo produced in the ſouthern regions; while chryſtal, ſlate, coal, ſtone and black marble are the natives of our more northern latitudes, leſs animated by the genial warmth of the ſun, and where every thing both of the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms ſeem to be produced rather as the neceſſaries than the luxuries of life. Not only the climate but the ſoil muſt be adapted to the particular ſpecies of vegetative ſtone, as well as to certain other vegetable productions. Thus we find in Ireland that coal grows in a bed of black ſlate, that lime-ſtone commonly grows in marl; freeſtone in an argilaceous earth, flint ſtone in a chalky ſoil, &c. &c. Yet I do not think it impoſſible, with ſome attention, to rear plants of Parian and Egyptian marbles in theſe climates,

as

as well as ananas and Cayan pepper. Plantations of ſtone may even become an object of the greateſt national importance; for if it were poſſible thereby, in the courſe of a few years to ſupply ſome of our large cities with this moſt excellent material for building, it would be of very great benefit to the ſtate; and I do not think it by any means impoſſible.

Is it not probable that even the metals are, I do not ſay vegetables, but vegetable productions? Chemiſts find in the analyzation of plants even a conſiderable quantity of iron; and the herbarized ſilver, &c. not uncommon in the cabinets of natural hiſtory, ſhould induce me to think ſo.

On

On putting the roots of flowers and plants into pure water, they are found to vegetate, and bloſſom, with as much ſtrength and luxuriance as if they were planted in a bed of earth; from which it is concluded, that all vegetables are nouriſhed by water, and perhaps the baſe of a gas or gaſſes abſorbed from the atmoſphere; and conſequently, I ſhould ſuppoſe, that ſtones are ſupplied with nouriſhment in a ſimilar manner. When the water is abſorbed into the vegetable veſſels, it undergoes ſome particular modifications, and is tranſmuted into the conſtituent parts of the vegetables into the carbonic, ligneous, and amylaceous matters, roſin, gum, eſſential oil, &c. When vegetable ſubſtances are received into the bodies of animals as nouriſhment to ſupport life, they are transformed into the ſubſtance of ſuch animals,

animals, into blood, membranous matter, and even into bones, from which can be obtained volatile alkali and phoſphorus. Thus it appears, that the greater part of all theſe ſubſtances once was abſolute *water*. But it has been proved to demonſtration, that water is compoſed of the baſes of vital air and of inflammable gas; that is to ſay, of oxygen and hydrogen: Conſequently, the greater part of our planet originated from theſe two ſeemingly elementary ſubſtances. Is it not probable, that theſe two primitive ſubſtances were by the ſolar light and heat elevated into aëriform fluidity, and then by combuſtion united, and condenſed into the ſtates of ice, liquidity and vapor; and that thence by vegetation have been produced the earths, metals, &c. &c.

No

No ſubſtance whatever can burn without the contact of vital air, the baſis of which precipitates itſelf into the body in combuſtion, ſuffering the fire to diſengage which kept it in aëriform ſuſpenſion. If that immenſe orb, the ſun, is an inflammable body in eternal combuſtion, muſt it not abſorb the baſis of vital air, and muſt not the ſolar light and heat proceed from the fixation of this vital air or oxygen gas? If ſo, from whence is the ſun ſupplied with oxygen gas: Is it from the decompoſition of vapor or rarified water on the ſurface of this our globe, and the other planets of our ſyſtem? If the ſun does really abſorb the baſis of vital air, muſt not it increaſe in weight or attraction; and muſt not its combuſtibility decreaſe, and perhaps occaſion the ſpots obſervable on the

ſun's diſk? Would the vortex occaſioned by ſuch an abſorption of the baſe of vital air from the other planets, be ſufficient to maintain them in eternal motion round the ſun? What becomes of the prodigious quantity of the matter of heat ſcattered from the ſun through the immenſe void, and to the different planets? Does it become tranſmuted into another ſubſtance, and acquire a ſpecific weight? Would it be abſurd, to ſuppoſe the ſun, to be itſelf the pure matter of fire, and that it diffuſes light and heat around without abſorbing any thing? And that, although the quantity of light and heat is immenſe, the ſun ſuffers no ſenſible diminution thereby?

LETTER

LETTER XXV.

Paris, 10th July.

I WAS yeſterday to ſee the hoſpital of *Hotel-Dieu*, in which it is ſaid there are generally more patients than in any other in the world. All manner of poor ſick people of every nation and religion, are, on preſenting themſelves, immediately received into the Hotel-Dieu. The hoſpital is very ancient; it had one St. Landry for its primitive founder; and St. Lewis, Henry I. and Henry IV. its principal benefactors. It is ſituated in the heart of Paris, without either field or garden belonging to it. It is built on each ſide of the river cloſe to the water's edge, and is united at the center by a bridge. The ſtreets which

ſurround this immenſe hoſpital, are narrow and filthy, and the houſes very high and full of inhabitants. Such an hoſpital, in ſuch a ſituation, muſt corrupt the air, and be an eternal ſource of peſtilential diſeaſes. There are frequently four thouſand patients together in the hoſpital; and yet there are only twenty-one chambers great and ſmall, and only one thouſand four hundred beds, to contain ſuch a multitude of ſick; who are crowded to the number of four, five, and even ſix, into the ſame bed! In ſome of the wards two or three hundred beds are, I may ſay, crammed into four rows; two rows in the middle, and one at each ſide. The nouriſhment and neceſſaries of the ſick are conveyed to them in wheel-barrows, the rolling of which upon the flags and tiled

tiled flooring, the groaning of ſuch a multitude of ſick, and ſometimes the dragging of iron ſcrapers, and daſhing peals of water on the floor, produce an uproar which is very diſagreeable to a man in health, but muſt be intolerable to the ſick. The Nuns, who attend the hoſpital, preceded by prieſts, with church banners, candles, &c. frequently march in religious proceſſion through the ſick wards of the hoſpital; which muſt very much diſturb the miſerable patients. The corrupt air and effluvia in ſome parts of the hoſpital are more loathſome and abominable than can be conceived. It is amazing, that there are men of conſtitutions ſufficiently vigorous, to recover in ſuch a place of vermin, filth, and horror. I ſhould think, that were a man in the

bloom of youth and health, and accuſtomed to the freſh air of the country, confined for a few hours in Hotel-Dieu, with three or four ſick men in the ſame bed, it ſhould be ſufficient to throw him into a dangerous fit of ſickneſs. At the entrance of one of the wards is a box, containing a great collection of the calculi, extracted from the bodies of miſerable creatures, who have ſubmitted to the dreadful operation of lithotomy, or cutting for the ſtone, in the hoſpital of Hotel-Dieu. Some of the calculi are very large, and ſhew what havoc this diſorder has made in France. If the calculi of ſuch only as have recovered after the operation, are preſerved, they are the moſt honorable trophies that were ever diſplayed by ſcience and humanity.

Every

Every ward of Hotel-Dieu preſents to view a variety of human miſery. I ſtopped a little before one of the beds, to conſider a ſight truly deplorable and dreadful. A patient in the agonies of death lay frightfully convulſed; and on the ſame pillow a man covered with loathſome ulcers repoſed his head; between whom lay the *corpſe* of an old man, ſtiff, ſhrunk, pale, and emaciated; the beard was long and black, the teeth all gone, the lips drawn in, and the eyes open, and frightfully ſeeming to ſtare! It is not uncommon to ſee in the ſame bed, one man expiring, one man eating, another dead, and the fourth perhaps ſinging to diſſipate the terror of his mind. The whole hoſpital is an aſſemblage of horror, miſery, and diſtreſs; and a man who for the firſt time can with dry eyes behold it,

muſt have a heart more obdurate than ſteel. All the oratory of the pulpit cannot give ſuch a leſſon of humanity, as a ſight of this diſmal houſe of ſorrow. The ſhrieks and convulſions of expiring patients melt the moſt brutal and cruel breaſts into pity and compaſſion; and the multitudes of cold and emaciated carcaſes continually vomited from this horrid maw of death, diſplay a frightful picture of human imperfection. Many, who though bleſſed with health, are tormented for trifling pecuniary loſſes, would inſtantly become content with their ſituations, on beholding the real miſeries of Hotel-Dieu. How many are there, whoſe ſilver minutes glide away in thoughtleſs gaiety and frivolity, while their fellow creatures here are plunged in a ſea of agony and horror?

So

So let the ſtricken deer go weep,
The Hart ungalled go play;
For ſome muſt watch, while others ſleep,
So runs the world away.

SHAKESPEAR.

It appears from ſome records of repreſentations from the ſurgeons of Hotel-Dieu to the parliament of Paris, that formerly they crammed, frequently to the number of ten, twelve, or even *fourteen* unhappy patients, piled a-top of one another into the ſame bed! This is almoſt incredible; yet the authority is unqueſtionable. Then, indeed, conſidering the ſtate of phyſick and ſurgery two or three centuries ago, the noſtrums, inſtruments, operations, applications, and bandages, the hoſpital of Hotel-Dieu muſt have been more

dreadful than even the black-hole of Calcutta. Even at preſent, it is a ſcandal to Chriſtianity and human nature. Let the French ſay, we are barbarous and ſavage, when they ſee a clan of our hot-headed peaſants fight one another with ſticks; yet I muſt ſay, there is more inhumanity in cramming half a dozen helpleſs ſick perſons into the ſame bed, than in devouring human fleſh like Cannibals. For the honor of my own country, I muſt confeſs, that there are no people in the world who ſhew more tenderneſs to ſick perſons than even our common people; though I own they ſometimes may be ſaid literally to ſmother them with too much kindneſs; and when they die, their friends abandon themſelves to deſpair,

deſpair, and ſhriek like ſo many demoniacs: for their friendſhip and paſſions are without bounds.

LETTER

LETTER XXVI.

Paris, 10th July.

THE practice of phyſic in the hoſpital of *Hotel-Dieu*, and in that called *la Charité*, is very different from that of the London hoſpitals. The patients are in general kept on a very low regimen; ptiſans are uſed in the greateſt profuſion; and opium is preſcribed in very ſmall doſes, and even then with the utmoſt caution. The quinquina is given ſparingly in caſes of mortification, and even in the treatment of intermittents. And I can affirm that there are many patients afflicted with intermitting fevers who die annually in the Pariſian hoſpitals, yet who might be ſaved by the liberal adminiſtration of this ineſtimable

timable medicine. In the hoſpital of la Charité, I have ſeen patients, who after having lingered for a long time, oppreſſed with intermitting fevers, at length would moſt aſtoniſhingly revive, and acquire new ſpirits, ſtrength, and appetite; and yet, receiving neither the Peruvian bark, good nouriſhment, or generous wine, would again fall into a ſtate of the moſt wretched debility, become dropſical, and miſerably periſh. And after this manner intermitting fevers very frequently terminate in the hoſpitals of Paris. The phyſicians ſeem abſolutely to dread the exhibition of the Peruvian bark in theſe diſorders; and generally preſcribe a very inadequate ſubſtitute, their *piſane amère*. They are not fond of giving this admirable medicine in ſubſtance; and even that which they do preſcribe in

ſubſtance,

ſubſtance, is commonly of an inferior quality, and coarſely powdered. I have ſeen patients at Hotel-Dieu, with mortified ſtumps, who after ſtruggling for a length of time, began evidently to recover and regain their appetites; while the ſphacelated matter would ſlough away, and they appear to require merely the aſſiſtance of generous nouriſhment to become once more re-eſtabliſhed in health; and yet, being denied even a ſufficiency of the common neceſſaries of life, would ſink into the jaws of death; I may ſay, would periſh through inanition. I have been told that the revenue of the hoſpital either was inſufficient, or ſo managed, that proper nouriſhment, good wine, and bark, could not be afforded to recovering patients, and therefore that the ſurgeons were not liable to cenſure.

In

In the chirurgical department of Hotel-Dieu, many particulars of our Engliſh practice have of late been introduced by the preſent *chirurgien major*, with very great ſucceſs. Pott's probe-pointed biſtouri has not as yet been introduced; yet that operation is performed at preſent in the Hotel-Dieu in a ſimple method, and by no means after the butcherly manner in which it was formerly done. The application uſed at preſent, is the unguentum cœruleum; however, the diſorder is generally treated with ſucceſs. I have many reaſons to induce me to think, that if *lime juice*, or even lemon juice, and water, were ſubſtituted for the greaſy applications made uſe of in this and many other hoſpitals, the innovation would be attended with wonderful ſucceſs. This practice was firſt propoſed

poſed in one of the medical journals by Mr. Gileſpie; and it is a pity that it has not been attended to as much as it ought. Wounds of the head are ſtill treated in the old French faſhion; quantities of lint are crammed through the perforations made by the trepan or trephine, upon the dura-mater, I may ſay, upon the brain; and the head is ſwathed with bandages, cover-chefs, and rollers of ſeveral yards in length. Although there are many things abſurd in the chirurgical practice of Pariſian hoſpitals, there are not any more glaringly ſo than this method of treating wounds of the head; and the dreadful mortality which attends it, ſufficiently evinces the impropriety, the madneſs of ſuch a treatment. There are many perſons who, though in perfect health, cannot bear a bandeau, or any thing tight

tight about the head, without being afflicted with pain and head-ach; and how inſupportable muſt it not be to a wounded man, in a high degree of fever and delirium, whoſe very brain is expoſed, to have his head inveloped in a multiplicity of bandages and ſheaths? Such a quantity of covering muſt keep the head intenſely warm, and conſequently increaſe the fever and delirium; and the preſſure cauſed by the bandages, &c. muſt be productive of much diſtreſs to the unhappy patient. It is truly aſtoniſhing, that men can deviate ſo much from nature and from reaſon, and that the improvements in phyſic and ſurgery, which at preſent appear ſo evident, ſo ſimple, and ſo obvious, ſhould have been the productions only of modern refinement, and the practice of above two thouſand years, after prodigious

prodigious multitudes of ſick had periſhed through the bungling practice of phyſicians and ſurgeons, and the abſurdity of cuſtom. In the operation of cutting for the ſtone at Hotel-Dieu, the *lithotome* of *frere Come* is ſtill very frequently uſed. The inciſion is generally made much ſmaller than that recommended by our beſt Engliſh practitioners, and conſequently very great violence is frequently uſed in the retraction of the forceps, and the parts barbarouſly lacerated and contuſed. The patients are generally ſituated in merely a half reclined poſture; by which, I ſhould think, the inteſtines, by preſſing down the ſuperior part of the bladder, muſt render it very liable to be wounded. It is not an uncommon thing to ſee to the number of ſeven or eight patients undergo the

the operation of lithotomy on the ſame morning at the Hotel-Dieu.

When life departs from the body of any of the patients in the hoſpital, there are perſons who extract the fineſt and beſt of the teeth, to ſell them to the Engliſh dentiſts, who ſometimes come to Paris on purpoſe to purchaſe them. Thus it may happen, that a tooth torn from the head of a miſerable Savoyard, or a *porteur d'eau* of Paris, who might have died of the ſcrophula, or ſome more foul diſeaſe, may be tranſplanted within the ruby lips of a delicate Engliſh lady of faſhion. Yet I am very far from thinking there is any thing very cenſurable in this cuſtom; the very reverſe; for I am convinced, that the teeth of a dead perſon may with as much ſafety and ſucceſs be tranſ-

planted

planted into the alveolar proceſs of a man or woman, as the teeth taken immediately from the living ſubject: for a tooth when drawn from a living perſon, is as effectually dead, as that taken from a body after the departure of life. Beſides, there is ſomething truly brutal and abominable in depriving an unhappy girl for a paltry trifle of a tooth, to tranſplant it into a fellow creature; when at the ſame time, a tooth extracted from the ſenſeleſs head of a dead man, would ſerve equally well. So unchriſtian, ſo ſhameful a cuſtom, deſerves the abhorrence of every man of feeling and humanity.

Such is the filthineſs of this immenſe hoſpital, that the patients in general get

get the *herpes*, which muſt be a moſt diſtreſſing torment to the ſick and wounded. The houſe likewiſe is full of vermin, eſpecially thoſe moſt abominable things called by the French *punaiſes*, and which are as yet very little known in Ireland. As ſoon as a patient is placed in his bed, theſe deteſtable creatures aſſail him on every ſide, deprive him of reſt, and keep him in continual anxiety and agitation. They even inſinuate themſelves by hundreds between the bandages and the fleſh of fractured limbs, and give the patients unceaſing torment; when the firſt ſurgeon of the hoſpital changes the dreſſings of a fractured limb, both himſelf and attendants very frequently are for a time employed in deſtroying theſe abominable creatures, eſpecially during

during the warmer months of ſummer and autumn*!

* I think the high beds in the French faſhion ſhould be preferred in our hoſpitals to thoſe at preſent in uſe, for the greater convenience of the ſurgeons and dreſſers. In my opinion we ſhould alſo adopt the large French windows opening like folding-doors from the center to each ſide. I do not mean that all the windows of our hoſpitals in ſo wet a climate ſhould be of this kind; but that ſome windows in the French faſhion ſhould be diſtributed through the wards, for the occaſional admiſſion of a ſudden and plentiful circulation of air.

LETTER

LETTER XXVII.

Paris, 12th July.

IT is amazing what multitudes of phyſicians and ſurgeons are diſtributed through every part of France; and yet I cannot ſay that phyſic, and ſurgery as commonly practiſed in France, are in a more improved ſtate than they were in England even half a century ago. It is a fact that, at this day, inoculation is ſcarcely known in many of their provincial towns. But whether this is cauſed by abſolute ignorance and prejudice, or by the prohibitions of the government, I do not know. Perhaps it were better to abandon inoculation altogether even in Great Britain and Ireland; for at preſent our phyſicians, and the

the people in general, are ſo convinced of the propriety of a cool method of treatment, that the diſorder, though taken in the natural way, would very ſeldom be attended with fatal conſequence. The leproſy when firſt introduced, raged with prodigious violence, and yet ſeemingly as not being endemial to Europe, began to degenerate, and at length has almoſt totally vaniſhed. In like manner, the variolous diſeaſe is an indigenous diſtemper; and either from the method of treatment or its nature, or perhaps both united, has not been for this laſt half century productive of ſuch mortal havoc as in former times, and even has diminiſhed with amazing rapidity. Thus perhaps, like the leproſy, this diſorder would in time totally dwindle away, if not continued in exiſtence by the

practice

practice of inoculation. The French phyſicians are extravagantly fond of preſcribing large quantities of ſoups, ptiſans, ſlops, baths, and *lavements*, to their patients, in almoſt every diſorder; and their practice altogether is very different from that of our Britiſh phyſicians. In ſyphilis many of them reduce their patients very much, by frequent warm baths; and very rarely, if ever, give bark and opium to fortify the patient againſt the corroſive power of mercurial preparations. The quinquina and Theban extract, two of the moſt admirable medicines which Heaven, in pity to the ſufferings of mankind, has bountifully beſtowed upon us, and without which very frequently a phyſician can do but little, are generally preſcribed in very trifling quantities; nor, as far as I have been able to

learn, has powdered opium been externally applied, by any French practitioner, to cancers and other painful ulcerations. Their preſcriptions in geral are very complex, and they frequently order above a dozen different ſubſtances, both ſimples and compounds, to be mixed together; and even ſometimes outdo the celebrated hotch-potch of Andromachus. It appears to me that in a farrago of this kind, where a variety of different medicines are jumbled together, it muſt often be very difficult to determine, what on the whole the effect may be, for even two medicines combined, produce a ſubſtance poſſeſſing properties peculiar to itſelf, and different from thoſe of either of its component parts; but when a phyſician thinks proper to order a variety of medicines to be compound-

ed

ed together, he muſt find it difficult to foreſee what different combinations take place by elective attractions, what ſubſtances become decompoſed, what medicines counteract one another, and on the whole, what the general effect may be. The beſt excuſe that can be given for a phyſician who preſcribes a Babylonic noſtrum of this kind, is, that he acts in imitation of a Roman emperor, who profeſſed himſelf of all religions, being convinced that ſome one or other of them was the right, and that conſequently his ſoul ſhould be ſaved. Perhaps in the univerſe there is not ſuch another compilation of pitiful abſurdities, as the *codex medicamentorius* of Paris, or diſpenſatory, according to which the apothecaries make up their noſtrums. It contains diſtilled

waters and ſirops *ad infinitum*; and even includes ſirop of *tobacco* and ſirop of *wormwood*.

That the French have not more good phyſicians, I do not think ſhould appear aſtoniſhing; for they ſee them ſo wretchedly, that very few perſons of abilities and education could think it worth their while to devote themſelves to the ſtudy of a profeſſion, which is looked upon with contempt, and thoſe who practiſe it, paid like hairdreſſers and barbers. In England it is different: The Engliſh are generous in many inſtances, but in none with more reaſon than in this. For there is no bleſſing in this world equal to health; it is the foundation of all other enjoyments; nor is there any thing

thing more horrible than agony and death. Without health, beauty, youth, love, riches, honor, all are nothing; and, I think, we cannot reward a man too much, who renders us capable of enjoying the pleaſures of life, who perhaps reſtores the drooping infant to its parents, the father to his family, the virgin to her lover.

In ſurgery, the French of late have not made ſuch improvements as the Engliſh, and appear to be far inferior in their inſtruments, operations, and treatment.

Although the French anatomiſts have not ſo much elucidated the lymphatic ſyſtem as ſome modern Engliſh ſurgeons, nevertheleſs, I am of opinion, that

that anatomy in general is better taught to the many at Paris than in any other ſchool of ſurgery whatever. This I attribute to the encouragements afforded by government, and to the facility with which dead bodies are acquired for diſſection; by which every ſtudent has it in his power to purſue the ſtudy as far as his inclination leads him. In Great-Britain and Ireland, by the laws of our matchleſs conſtitution, the properties of individuals are eſteemed ſacred and inviolable; and every one is ſuppoſed to have a right to conſign his body to whatever place or perſon he pleaſes. We alſo have a certain awful reverence for the dead, which among the vulgar degenerates into terror and ſuperſtitious fear, and which makes us ſhrink with horror at the thought

thought of anatomiſing a corpſe. This to a ſurgeon accuſtomed to diſſection, appears moſt contemptible nonſenſe, and abſurdity; and he is incapable of feeling any more emotion on diſſecting the muſcles, blood veſſels, or nerves of a man's body, than on diſſecting the muſcles, blood veſſels, or nerves of a ſheep. To have a reſpect for a machine which once was animated and ſimilar to ourſelves, ſeems charitable and inherent in our natures; and yet, it may be diſputed, whether it be more decent, more reſpectful, to let the carcaſe of a man, who dies in a mad-houſe, corrupt and liquify into odious putrefaction in a coffin, than be diſſected while freſh, for the benefit of ſcience, and to alleviate the miſeries of mankind. A dead body is incapable of ſenſation;

ſenſation; and moſt certainly, it is better to permit the bodies of dead men to be diſſected, than that the living ſhould ſuffer through the unſkilfulneſs of the ſurgeons.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

ſenſation; and moſt certainly, it is better to permit the bodies of dead men to be diſſected, than that the living ſhould ſuffer through the unſkilfulneſs of the ſurgeons.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.